

TERMS OF REFERENCE

SHORT TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT

Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Studies contributing to Education Sector Analysis and Planning

BACKGROUND

UNICEF Pacific is actively supporting Pacific Island countries and territories with the development of evidence based, gender responsive, risk informed education sector plans for quality, inclusive education. A GEDSI education is part of a comprehensive response to ensure that all children, adolescents and young people have continuous, safe and equal access to learning in all contexts. It is an approach that seeks to address and respond to the diverse needs of all learners.

This terms of reference outlines the expected support in 6 countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) to undertake a mixed methodology study and complete a report per country on GEDSI as part of sector analysis with findings and recommendations to inform the next education sector plan in each country, and/or to strengthen existing and/or planned education programmes in countries that already have recent education sector plan developed. Each country has specific lenses of emphasis for their own study although gender, disability and remote student groups are identified by all as multiple and overlapping factors that have an enormous impact on a child, adolescent and young person's access, participation, retention, and learning outcomes.

It is critical that the consultancy/ies be designed and delivered with a clear commitment to Ministry leadership and ownership, use of Pacific methodologies, and highly participatory and consultative processes, including active engagement of diverse partners and stakeholders. Prospective consultants are encouraged to consider the full scope of work as described here and may submit proposals for all countries or specifically identify individual countries if preferred.

Over 2020-2021 a regional review of inclusive education policy, practice and environments was undertaken. The design and implementation of the review was guided by the Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Taskforce. Consultations with relevant stakeholders on GEDSI education on policy, practice and environments were conducted in each country and based on the wide consultation, both the regional review and national profiles were produced. The aims of the review were to take stock of the status of, and approaches to, GEDSI education in the Pacific; and to launch a regional discussion on good practices, priorities and lessons learnt to date on GEDSI education with the aim of informing next steps, including education policies and planning, that promote equality and inclusiveness of all learners in the Pacific

Challenges in accessing quality education in the Pacific are related to factors such as gender, disability, remoteness, poverty, ethnicity, language, migration, sexual orientation and gender identity. These factors are intertwined to form multi-faceted dimensions of exclusion experienced by learners. . Disadvantages and barriers experienced by learners with disabilities appear to be the most complex and compounding. Given the well-established link between disability and poverty, it is vital that learners with disabilities are not further excluded from the lifelong and generational benefits that education brings.

Generally, gender is a well-documented factor leading to marginalization in education. However, the impact of disability on gender in education is less well documented. Learning outcomes for students with disabilities are maximized by access to specialist services (examples include occupational therapy, physiotherapy, educational psychology, speech therapy etc.), which are often available through Ministries of Health although the scope and level of support available varies considerably across countries. Enabling access and participation in education for students with disabilities requires multi-sectoral efforts including health, social welfare, internal affairs, transport, infrastructure, women's, children's and adolescents' affairs, law and education.

A general lack of disaggregated data also compounds the problem of identifying accurate information on children, adolescents and young people affected, and that the scarcity of data may reflect the lack of attention given to these groups and their ‘invisibility’ in statistics.

OBJECTIVE / SCOPE OF WORK

The Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) TA is expected to contribute to the education sector analysis and development of new national education sector plans by bringing perspectives on gender, equity, disability and social inclusion into the analysis and development process in six countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, RMI, FSM, and Samoa).

Levels of awareness vary considerably within each country, and it is the GEDSI TA’s responsibility to prepare an analysis of GEDSI issues that will support preparation of each new education sector plan and/or its implementation, and support each Ministry/Department to ensure that GEDSI issues are reflected in goals, outcomes and strategies across each plan and identifies approaches to implementation.

Research has shown that education that is inclusive leads to better learning outcomes for all learners. In these 6 countries, gender disparity in education is more prevalent in secondary education, where girls’ enrollment, retention, completion and learning outcomes tend to be higher than boys. While it might appear that girls have an advantage over boys in the education context, success in school does not necessarily translate into an advantage beyond school as girls/ young women do not experience higher economic and social empowerment and full political participation. The compounding barriers that girls/ young women experience lead to a trajectory of marginalization. For example, emerging research shows that even though boys and girls with disabilities experience similar type of social exclusion at school, girls are further impeded by social and gender norms and cultural perceptions of their learning and employment capabilities (as girls/young women and person with a disability). As a result, when girls/young women (with or without a disability) are excluded from education they are more likely to be excluded from employment opportunities. Overall, children, adolescents and young people with disabilities and other marginalised groups (i.e., out of school children and children in remote areas) do not experience the same access, participation, completion and learning outcomes as other children, adolescents and young people.

All countries have some level of consideration towards students with a disability and some gender responsive teaching and learning. However, other aspects of social inclusion such as location in remote areas, lower socio-economic backgrounds, and internally displaced populations receive little attention in current plans. In terms of disability and inclusion, issues of concern include access to inclusive learning environments, availability of teachers trained in inclusive education, availability of reasonable accommodation including but not limited to provision of assistive technologies, and the barriers and bottlenecks to participation, retention and transition and learning pathways of out-of-school children and adolescents.

Research is needed to better understand and address the differences in participation and achievement in school, as well as in outcomes thereafter, and to identify the strategies and measures that can be put in place to facilitate equitable access to learning opportunities, equitable learning outcomes and transition to the world of employment for boys and girls. Furthermore, an understanding of the bottlenecks and challenges for boys and girls, including children and adolescents with disabilities and other marginalised groups and the sociocultural, systemic and structural barriers impacting their engagement in school and life beyond school.

Specific tasks

To conduct a **detailed GEDSI study for each country** that covers the following elements (as feasible based on available data/documentation (see details in the Annex), all with an equity-focused gender, disability and inclusion lens, and covering the full education sector (early childhood, primary and secondary, including learning pathways and “pre-tertiary” TVET) as well as transitions to further study, work and life after schooling that are impacted by wider social influences:

- Assessment of the enabling environment;
- Assessment of data and evidence;
- Assessment of the education sector;
- Assessment of the specific challenges, barriers and opportunities for gender equality, disability and inclusion in education and transitions thereafter;
- Assessment of the institutional capacity to address gender equality, disability and inclusion in education; and
- Assessment of service delivery for children and adolescents with disabilities.

The GEDSI study will involve analysing existing documents (including relevant plans/reform strategies) and quantitative and qualitative data at national and Pacific regional levels (including on Pacific Data Hub, UNICEF sitans, PacREF documents, MICS EAGLE, etc.) as well as primary data collected through interviews with diverse stakeholders, including those with expertise on gender, disability and inclusion.

The GEDSI study should be designed under the leadership of and with full ownership of each country, and in full coordination with the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and planning processes. Every attempt should be made to engage with partners and stakeholders with GEDSI related elements in their work that more broadly contribute to the education sector. The GEDSI study for each country should serve as a standalone document but should also be designed for comprehensive coverage of GEDSI issues across the ESA and to be integrated therein.

In addition to the above elements, specific research tasks or approaches are to be carried out for each country as part of the study, based on their specific areas of interest (as outlined below).

For each country, the process is expected to start with inception phase with desk review, initial consultations and inception report outlining the agreed methodology and timeline. As throughout the process, this would be fully led and owned by the government agency, as would the subsequent steps to implement the study, expected to include:

- detailed analysis of existing data and analysis as well as additional data collection as outlined in the inception report;
- development of a draft report drawing on and validated through in-country consultations with the national agency, partners and stakeholders;
- preparation of a final report, presentation and brief, including key barriers and opportunities for GEDSI as well as co-designed country-specific recommended actions with a clear rationale for their prioritization in the education sector plan and the feasibility of their implementation; and the review of the draft ESA/ESP (once available) to ensure GEDSI issues are comprehensively addressed throughout.

An additional estimated 5 working days to provide targeted follow-up on any specific area of GEDSI support that may emerge from the analysis is proposed per country, although this would be managed on an “as needed” basis.

Throughout the consultancy, it is expected that the consultant use Pacific methodologies and highly participatory and consultative processes. A draft Pacific consultation guide will be made available in the inception phase of this consultancy. Consultants are encouraged to draw on expertise from the region/country where relevant and may sub-contract as required to achieve this.

TUVALU

- Conduct a detailed GEDSI study in Tuvalu, through a desk review, and consultation with the Tuvalu Education Partners Group (TEPG), national education and social sector stakeholders, including students, culminating in a report with attention to gender, girls and boys students with a disability and remote students as well as other marginalized cohorts.

- Pay attention to a culture of inclusion at all levels (national, sub-national, schools) including through further study and secondary analysis as part of the Sector Analysis and Planning
- Pay specific attention to retention and outcomes for boys at secondary level and the stereotypes, attitudes, norms and practices that are harmful and discriminatory.
- Identify possible collaborations to improve access, participation and outcomes for girls and boys students with a disability.
- Identify contextualized strategies/interventions to address gender disparities and inclusion and provide recommendations for incorporating these into the new Tuvalu Education Sector Plan (TESP IV) and review the draft sector plan for additional recommendations or support.

Immediately available information includes: a recent Education Statistics Digest (2115-22), MICS and draft MICS EAGLE analysis, national gender equity policy. Country Profile from Regional Inclusive Education Review (UNICEF, 2020), Enabling Factor Analysis.

KIRIBATI

- Conduct a detailed GEDSI study of Kiribati, through a desk review, and consultation with the Education Partners in Kiribati (EPiK) and its LEG Sub-committee, national education and social sector stakeholders, including students, culminating in a report with attention to gender, students with a disability, students from lower socio-economic groupings and remote students as well as other marginalized cohorts such as children living with a single/no biological parents.
- Pay specific attention to enrolment, participation, retention and learning outcomes for boys at all levels of education, and skills in connection with TVET.
- Identify contextualized strategies/interventions to address gender disparities and inclusion and provide recommendations for incorporating these and the study findings into the new Education Framework and recommendations for specific activities in the first 4-year implementation plan.
- Review the ESSP2023-2027 and multi-year operational plan for additional recommendations or support to implementation through a GESI lens

Immediately available data and studies on GEDSI includes: a recent Education Statistics Digest (2015-20), MICS and MICS EAGLE analysis, a SPC (RRRT) baseline study for social citizenship (2019), Country Profile from Regional Inclusive Education Review (UNICEF, 2020), Enabling Factor Analysis, draft Education Sector Analysis, ESSP2023-2027 and multi-year operational plan, gender-based bullying in JSS study (2020), Case study on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of Menstrual Hygiene Management in Kiribati Schools (2018), study on menstrual hygiene management in Kiribati schools.

Available relevant legislations and policies for review includes: Education Act, ECCE Act and regulations, Inclusive Education Policy, Safe school policy and annexes, Kiribati ECD Policy, Free education For All policy (Year10-13).

Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)

- Conduct a detailed GEDSI study of RMI, through a desk review, and consultation with the Local Education Group (LEG), national education and social sector stakeholders, including students, culminating in a report with attention to gender, students with a disability and remote students as well as other marginalized cohorts.

- Pay specific attention to young mothers of secondary age with babies/pregnant, girls from displaced communities, impact of climate change on girls and girls' education in a climate-induced emergency.
- Identify contextualized strategies/interventions to address gender disparities and inclusion and provide strategic recommendations for incorporating these into the new Education Sector Plan and review the draft sector plan for additional recommendations or support.
- Make direct links between the priorities of the Partnership Compact and GEDSI issues, particularly those relating to gender equality to support funding applications for the girls' accelerator grant.
- Given RMI is the only Pacific country eligible for the Girls Accelerator Grant through Global Partnership for Education funding, the GEDSI study will identify evidence-based actions and strategies to support opportunities for girls to attend school and learn, leading to transformational change. The GEDSI study will also provide relevant recommendations to successfully apply for this grant.

Immediately available information includes: RMI Education Indicators 2022, Education Statistical Digest 2023, RMI VNR 2021, RMI PILNA 2021, Marshall Islands Gender Equality Overview (ADB, 2020), Country Profile from Regional Inclusive Education Review (UNICEF, 2020), Gender Equality In Education Snapshot Of The Republic Of The Marshall Islands (RMI) (2023), Enabling Factor Analysis, RMI Education Partnership Pact

Samoa

- Conduct a detailed GEDSI study in Samoa, through a desk review, and consultation with the Local Education Group (LEG), national education and social sector stakeholders, including students, culminating in a report with attention to gender, girls and boys students with a disability and remote girls and boys students as well as other marginalized cohorts.
- Pay specific attention to enrolment, participation, retention and learning outcomes for boys at all levels of education
- Identify possible collaborations to improve access, participation, retention and outcomes for girls and boys with a disability.
- Identify contextualized strategies/interventions to address gender disparities and inclusion and provide recommendations for incorporating these strategies into the new Education Sector Plan and review the draft sector plan for additional recommendations or support.

Immediately available information includes: Enabling Factor Analysis. Draft MICS EAGLE Analysis. Other relevant documents to be reviewed will be provided upon commencement of work.

FIJI

- Conduct a detailed GEDSI study in Fiji, through a desk review, and consultation with the Education Partners Group (EPG), national education and social sector stakeholders, [Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection](#) including students, culminating in a report with attention to gender, students with a disability and remote students as well as other marginalized cohorts [Data and qualitative analysis should consider all lenses of disaggregation including but not limited to geography, socio-economic and ethnicity.](#)
- Pay attention to a culture of inclusion at all levels (national, sub-national, schools) including through further study and secondary analysis as part of the Sector Analysis and Planning
- Pay specific attention to girls and boys students at risk of exclusion based behavioral and social challenges
- Identify possible collaborations to improve access, participation, retention and outcomes for girls and boys students with a disability [with attention to mitigating barriers and bottlenecks.](#)

- Identify contextualized strategies/interventions to address gender disparities and inclusion and provide recommendations for incorporating these into the new Education Sector Plan and review the draft sector plan for additional recommendations or support.

Immediately available information includes the recent Education Sector Analysis, outcomes of the National Summit on Education, MICS EAGLE, data from FEMIS, a range of social sector reports.

Fiji is also currently developing a programme of work around reform priorities. The consultant would be requested to review the programme document for the educational reform to make any recommendations on equity and inclusion.

Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

- Conduct a detailed social inclusion study in FSM, through a desk review, and consultation with the Local Education Group (LEG), national education and social sector stakeholders, including students, culminating in a report with attention to gender, boys and girls students with a disability and remote boys and girls students as well as other marginalized cohorts.
- Pay specific attention to enrolment, participation, retention and learning outcomes for boys at all levels of education
- Identify possible collaborations to improve access, participation, retention and outcomes for girls and boys students with a disability.
- Identify contextualized strategies/interventions to address gender disparities and inclusion and provide recommendations for incorporating these into the new Education Sector Plan and review the draft sector plan for additional recommendations or support.

Immediately available information includes: FSM VNR 2020, FSM Education Sector Analysis (2020), Gender Equality Brief for FSM (UN Women 2022), FSM Education Indicators Report 2022, Education Statistics Digest (NDOE 2022), PILNA Reports (2018 and 2021), Country Profile from Regional Inclusive Education Review (UNICEF, 2020), Enabling Factor Analysis.

Prospective contractors are encouraged to consider the full scope of work as described here, and may submit proposals for the full scope of work or a portion thereof (e.g. for specific country/countries only).

ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINES, PLUS PAYMENT SCHEDULE PER DELIVERABLE

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLES	ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE	PAYMENT
Inception report outlining the methodology in line with the elements of the GEDSI study (see Annex), assessment of risks and challenges and a draft timeline. Prepare an initial desk review on GEDSI-related matters in each allocated country (may include remote meetings/initial consultation)	Overarching inception report (can be multi-country) Desk review per country	5 days per country	10%
In-country consultation	Draft report available for stakeholder review	20 in-country days per country	50%

Development of draft report in collaboration with national agency, partners and stakeholders.			
Final report integrating feedback as relevant with full findings and recommendations for consideration in the new education sector plan. Summary (1pg) document or presentation for use with stakeholders	Final report including findings and recommendation for framework/sector plan as relevant. Summary document/ presentation	10 days per country	30%
Review draft ESA/ESP to provide feedback, possible revised text, recommendations to strengthen documents in relation to identification and response to GEDSI issues.	Peer review of ESA/ESP documents with report	5 days per country	10%
Technical support (estimated 5 days per country / 25 days total for technical support		25 days total	To be distributed across contract/s as relevant
			<i>TOTAL 100%</i>

QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

Bachelors Masters PhD Other

Master's degree in social sciences, education, gender, psychology or other relevant field with at least 7 years of demonstrated experience in:

- Working with and advocating for GEDSI issues in education.
- Proven experience and expertise in gender, inclusive education, policy and practice (at least 8 years)
- Demonstrated experience working with Ministries of Education, other relevant ministries and development partners
- Strong writing and analytical skills and GEDSI report writing experience.
- Proven experience in developing GEDSI strategies and interventions in the education field, including M&E of the same.
- Proven ability to work with a team of experts and stakeholders, including government and non-government bodies.
- 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.

CONDITIONS OF WORK AND CLARIFICATION ON SUPERVISION

The consultant will be supervised on a day-to-day basis by the nominated official in each national education department, with oversight in-country by UNICEF field office teams, and technical guidance and supervision, including contract management, provided by the UNICEF Pacific Chief of Education. Final approval of deliverables for payment will be done by the UNICEF Pacific Chief of Education based on advice from the national education department.

The consultant is expected to travel to the county for in-person work (estimated 20 days per country with the exception of Kiribati for 45 days), including in-person engagement in key meetings and consultations, and may

work remotely the remainder of the time. When working remotely, the consultant is expected to be available for discussions as required during working hours of the country. All costs associated with travel to and within the country are to be budgeted in the financial proposal for inclusion in the total contract value.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- 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.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant/contractor.
- Consultant/Contractor 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

- Please submit CV, brief (2-page) technical proposal, and financial proposal. The technical and financial proposal should specifically identify which country/ies are included. The financial proposal should reflect a lump sum amount for all the deliverables and should show a break down for the following:
 - Monthly / Daily fees– based on the deliverables in the Terms of Reference above
 - Travel (economy air ticket where air travel is applicable) to take up assignment plus field mission travel
 - Living allowance/per diem where travel is required
 - Miscellaneous- to cover visa, health insurance (including medical evacuation for international consultants), travel insurance, communications, and other costs.

ANNEX

Elements to be included in the detailed GEDSI study for each country (as feasible based on available data/documentation) include the following:

Assessment of the enabling environment:

- legal, policy and institutional frameworks and the extent to which they address gender equality, disability, inclusion and discrimination (particularly in the education sector)
- commitments to gender equality, persons with disabilities and inclusion
- targeted poverty alleviation and social protection measures for women and other excluded/vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities and communities in remote areas
- female labour market participation, including female participation in various occupations
- female annual income as compared to men's
- gender differences in the incidence of poverty and the intersect with disability and geographical location (i.e. remote areas)
- participation of women, persons with disabilities and remote communities in decision-making processes in the political, public and private sectors
- community engagement in shaping policies and holding governments accountable to gender equality commitments and commitments to persons with disabilities and promoting the rights of girls, women, children and adolescents with disabilities and their rights to and through education
- allocation of human and financial resources to promoting gender equality and inclusion of children and adolescents with disabilities and children and adolescents in remote areas in education (i.e. sector finance and school-level finance)
- school management, school leadership and quality standards

Assessment of data and evidence:

- definition of disability within the education sector
- systems in place to collect data on the participation and learning outcomes of children and adolescents with disabilities

Assessment of the education sector (early childhood, primary and secondary) with a gender, disability and inclusion lens:

- extent to which the policy context address gender, disability and inclusion
- existence of policies to address safety in schools (i.e. gender-based violence), school-aged mothers, pregnant girls, early marriage, menstrual hygiene, sexual and reproductive health, the needs of children and adolescents with disabilities and children and adolescents in remote areas
- identification of policies that may have an impact on gender equality, disability and inclusion in education (i.e. school fee abolition policy, language of instruction)
- existence of policies/measures to increase the number of female managers or decision makers
- existence of policies/measures to ensure that the development process for curriculum and teaching/learning materials is gender responsive and inclusive of children and adolescents with disabilities and children and adolescents in remote areas
- existence of sector goals and targets for key indicators such as enrollment, attendance, retention, repetition, transition to secondary, completion, or achievement that are disaggregated by sex, disability and geographic location

Assessment of the specific challenges, barriers and opportunities for gender equality, disability and inclusion in education and transitions thereafter:

- identify disparities in access, participation, progress, retention, completion, transition (including to learning pathways) and learning outcomes at the various levels of education and including for out of school children and adolescents
- identify gender disparities across different population groups that cover other factors of disadvantage, i.e. location, disability, migration status, income, linguistic and ethnic background, etc.
- identify factors contributing to these disparities, including: physical/financial access to school; learning environments; teachers, teaching and learning processes/practices (including curricula, learning

materials, pedagogies, classroom interactions, subject selection); community engagement, parents and school management committees

- experience of boys and girls in school, including children and adolescents with disabilities and children and adolescents from remote areas through dialogue with families, communities, schools and civil society
- identify school-level factors that contribute to these disparities, including infrastructure, social/protective environment, equipment and materials, discipline, etc.
- Notes: UN Women has also completed a number of gender equality briefs for individual Pacific states which can help with contextual setting

Assessment of the institutional capacity to address gender equality, disability and inclusion in education

- capacity of government ministries and their staff at various levels to address gender issues and the needs of children and adolescents with disabilities/children and adolescents in remote areas in education, namely technical skills, organizational structure and systems and institutional culture

Assessment of service delivery for children and adolescents with disabilities:

- the supply, quality and demand in relation to service delivery for children and adolescents with disabilities. From a supply perspective, this would cover teachers' capacity and training; infrastructure; and learning material. From a quality perspective this would cover curriculum; student assessment; and learning support. From a demand perspective this would cover attitudes, costs and benefits.