

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS

Title: Inclusive Education Strategy	Funding Code: Grant: WBS:	Type of Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant (International) <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant (National)	Duty Station: Hybrid
Background: <p>The fundamental mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything the organization does — in programs, in advocacy and in operations. The equity strategy, emphasizing the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, translates this commitment to children's rights into action. For UNICEF, equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias, or favoritism. To the degree that any child has an unequal chance in life — in its social, political, economic, civic, and cultural dimensions — her or his rights are violated. There is growing evidence that investing in the health, education, and protection of a society's most disadvantaged citizens — addressing inequity — not only will give all children the opportunity to fulfill their potential but also will lead to sustained growth and stability of countries. This is why the focus on equity is so vital. It accelerates progress towards realizing the human rights of all children, which is the universal mandate of UNICEF, as outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, while also supporting the equitable development of nations.</p> <p>The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) aims to improve access to and quality of education for all children, with an emphasis on the most marginalized. <i>Delivering the foundations of learning for all</i> has been identified as the priority reform that focuses on transferring basic literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills – the fundamental building blocks for all other learning, knowledge, and higher-order skills.</p> <p>The Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) has developed a Radical Inclusion Policy with a focus on the needs of the most marginalized students. It identifies four groups of marginalized students: students with disabilities (23 per cent of children aged 5-17 have functional difficulty¹), pregnant girls and parent learners (1,289 pregnant girls were enrolled in school in 2022²), children from the poorest households, and children in rural and underserved areas (48 per cent points difference in the probability of completing primary education between children in the wealthiest and poorest households³). The four key objectives include: creating inclusive learning environments, targeting support to vulnerable learners, engaging families, and communities, and creating an enabling policy environment. Besides this aspirational policy that is accompanied by an ambitious roadmap for implementation, there are a few additional policies that are of relevance for inclusive education: strategy on out-of-school children (2022) recognizing the multifaceted issues (Health, social protection, SBC, education etc.); Assistive Technology Policy and Strategic Plan (21-25); National Policy on Integrated Early Childhood Development. Despite the policy enabling environment the operationalization of policies and strategies remains an issue due to the limited implementation capacity within the MBSSE.</p>			

¹ MICS6

² Annual School Census 2022

³ Education Sector Plan, Sierra Leone 2022-2026

Over the past years, UNICEF Sierra Leone education programme supported the MBSSE in strengthening inclusive educational planning through technical support to develop the above-mentioned policies and capacity building. However, UNICEF Sierra Leone is yet to develop an actionable and comprehensive inclusive education strategy to expand and strengthen inclusion throughout its programming and to support the MBSSE in the operationalization of the Radical Inclusion policy.

It is against this background that UNICEF Sierra Leone seeks to hire an international expert to provide technical assistance for the development of UNICEF Sierra Leone inclusive education strategy (pre-primary to senior secondary).

Purpose and Objectives:

The purpose of this consultancy is to develop UNICEF Sierra Leone inclusive education strategy to address gender, equality, disability, and social inclusion in education. Through a cross-sectoral approach, the consultant will work in close collaboration with UNICEF Sierra Leone Education section and relevant national stakeholders, particularly the MBSSE, the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), the Ministry of Health (MoH) and National Commission for Person with Disability (NCPD).

The objectives of this assignment are:

1. Develop UNICEF inclusive education strategy comprehensive of perspectives on gender, equity, disability, and social inclusion, an actionable road map and a costed operational plan.
2. Develop the capacity of UNICEF education staff (including staff from other sections, as needed) and the MBSSE officials to address gender, equality, disability, and social inclusion in education.
3. Build the momentum for enhancing implementation of sector inclusive education policy.

Methodology and Technical Approach:

Through remote and face-to-face consultations/workshops with and trainings to UNICEF education staff and relevant MDAs officials the consultant will deliver the tasks listed below.

Specific Tasks:

Under objective 1 the specific tasks are:

- Conduct a Gender, Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) study of the UNICEF education programme and the MBSSE education plan through desk review, consultations with UNICEF staff and relevant MDAs officials as well as field visits to conduct focus group discussion with children and parents.
- Building on findings and recommendations from the study, to develop UNICEF inclusive education strategy, road map and costed work plan. The strategy should include a mapping of the stakeholders with whom UNICEF could collaborate to implement the strategy.

Under objective 2 the specific tasks are:

- Assess capacity and gaps among UNICEF education staff and MBSSE officials on addressing gender, equality, disability, and social inclusion in education.
- Develop training modules based on the skill gaps identified.
- Conduct at least two capacity building trainings for UNICEF staff and MBSSE officials on addressing gender equality, disability, and inclusion in education.

Under objective 3 the specific tasks are:

- Based on the findings from the GEDSI study and the UNICEF inclusive strategy, to develop a policy brief on inclusive education.

- Develop an advocacy and communication plan in alignment with the inclusive education strategy.
- Organize and deliver a one-day seminar on inclusive education in Freetown to launch the GEDSI study of the MBSSE education plan and share its key findings and recommendations with key stakeholders.

Management, Organization and Timeframe:

The Consultant will work under the overall guidance and oversight the Education Specialist, System Strengthening. In delivering the tasks, she/he will work in close coordination with UNICEF Sierra Leone education staff. The consultant will operate from home with travels to Freetown as required (at least three travels). The need for travel in the field will be discussed with the Consultant at the inception of the work. UNICEF will cover the logistic costs for the capacity building trainings and the one-day seminar.

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: 6 months	Payment schedule: Payment on acceptance of deliverables
Start date of consultancy		15 May 2024	
Submit inception report/ detail work plan and road map	Inception Report with workplan	15 days from signing of contract	35%
Conduct a Gender, Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) study	GEDSI Study	End of month 2.5	
Develop UNICEF inclusive education strategy, road map and costed work plan.	Strategy, road map and costed work plan	End of month 3.5	
Assess capacities and gaps among UNICEF education staff and MBSSE officials on addressing gender equality, disability, and inclusion in education.	Capacity assessment	End of 3.5 month	35%
Develop training modules based on the skill gaps identified.	Training modules	End of 4.5 month	
Conduct at least two capacity building trainings for UNICEF staff and MBSSE officials on addressing gender equality, disability, and inclusion in education.	Trainings	End of 5.5 month	
Develop a policy brief on inclusive education.	Policy brief	End of 5 month	30%
Develop an advocacy and communication plan in alignment with the inclusive education strategy	Advocacy and communication plan	End of 5 month	
Organize and deliver a one-day seminar on inclusive education	Seminar	End of 6 month	

* **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 development of the GEDSI study, the inclusive education strategy, the advocacy plan as well as the delivery of trainings require dedicated 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: 15 th May 2024	End Date: 15 th November 2024	Number of (working) Days/Months: 120 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			
Minimum Qualifications required: <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other Enter Disciplines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociology • Social Sciences • Education • Gender • Psychology 	Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required: <u>Experience and Skills required</u> At least 8 years of demonstrated experience in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with and advocating for GEDSI issues in education. • Proven experience and expertise in gender, inclusive education, policy, and practice. • Demonstrated experience working with Ministries of Education, other relevant ministries, and development partners. • Proven experience in developing GEDSI strategies, inclusive education strategies, and interventions in the education field, including M&E of the same. • Proven experience in developing policy brief and advocacy plan on inclusive education. • Proven experience in conducting capacity building trainings on addressing gender equality, disability, and inclusion in education. • Strong writing and analytical skills. • Proven ability to work with a team of experts and stakeholders, including government and non-government bodies. • Previous relevant work experience in Africa contexts will be well regarded. • Experience in working with UNICEF, other UN agency or regional organization preferred. • Excellent spoken and written English language skills. 		

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 style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <i>Endorsed by Deputy Representative Programme (OiC)</i> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <i>Approved by Representative</i> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/> </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.