

## Terms of reference for the recruitment of two long-term full-time consultants to support GCI and R&D - Dakar activities

### Presentation

#### IIEP-UNESCO Dakar

IIEP-UNESCO Dakar, located in Dakar, Senegal, is the Africa office of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO). IIEP is a specialized UNESCO institute whose mandate is to strengthen the capacity of Member States to plan and manage their education systems. IIEP-UNESCO Dakar is renowned for its education sector analysis and helps African countries develop robust education system development plans within the framework of the 2030 education agenda.

Through a capacity development approach, IIEP-UNESCO Dakar contributes to the production of diagnostic analyses, sector plans and pedagogical tools that contribute to more relevant and sustainable education policies. IIEP-UNESCO Dakar is also actively involved in the production of knowledge for the education sector in Africa. More information on its activities can be found at [IIEP-UNESCO Dakar](#).

#### Gender at the Center Initiative (GCI)

As part of its strategy and commitment to reducing inequalities in education, UNESCO-IIEP Headquarters and its Africa Office in Dakar (UNESCO-IIEP Dakar) provide technical leadership for the Gender at the Center Initiative (GCI). Launched in 2019 at the G7 Summit, GCI recognizes the urgency of ensuring equal access to quality education and overcoming the barriers to education that girls and young women continue to face. The Initiative aims to support and strengthen existing skills and structures to advance gender equality in the education systems of Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Chad, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Mozambique. Coordinated by the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), GCI also brings together partners such as UNICEF and the Global Partnership for Education, as well as a consortium of non-governmental organizations.

One of the goals of the GCI team is to support planning processes (so that education administrations take greater account of gender dynamics and gender-specific needs in its policies, programs, and actions).

#### Dakar R&D

The recently created IIEP-UNESCO Dakar Research and Development program (Dakar-R&D) aims to generate knowledge to inform and guide decision making in the planning, management, and capacity building processes of the education and training sectors in Africa. In close collaboration with the other IIEP-UNESCO Dakar teams<sup>1</sup>, with the IIEP offices in Paris and Buenos Aires, and with external partners<sup>2</sup>, the Dakar-R&D team works to develop, refine, and expand bodies of knowledge and tools to help identify, facilitate, and promote the adoption of effective, efficient, and sustainable solutions to Africa's most pressing educational challenges.

**GCI and Dakar-R&D are currently developing several research and development projects with a view to generating new knowledge and analytical tools to clarify gender equality practices in education,**

<sup>1</sup> Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and Education Sector Plan (ESP); Gender Initiative at the Center (GCI); Quality Management Program (APIQ); Technical Cooperation (TC); Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) and Training.

<sup>2</sup> Other UN agencies, funding partners, academic and research institutions, and networks.

**facilitate understanding of issues and challenges, and support decision-making on gender equality in and through education.**

### Context, projects, and activities

**GCI and Dakar-R&D are recruiting two junior/mid-level long-term consultants to support the development of the following projects:**

#### 1. School-related gender-based violence

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) affects millions of children, families, and communities, with serious consequences for students' lives, educational outcomes, and future opportunities for social and economic integration ([UNESCO](#)). One of the greatest difficulties that countries have, to face this phenomenon with forcefulness is the absence of data and to accurately measure and monitor the phenomenon and design adequate evidence-based responses.

This project aims to respond to this need by documenting and designing methodological tools to improve measurement, collection, and monitoring of school-related gender-based violence in the eight GCI countries, starting in Niger, where, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the first pilot case will be implemented.

The findings and outputs of this project will serve to lay the foundations for an in-depth reflection on and better integration of school-related gender-based violence in education systems, particularly in gender-sensitive education policy planning and management processes.

#### 2. Political economy of early childhood education (ECE) and gender equity policy linkages

Although there is global agreement on the economic, educational, and welfare returns of quality early childhood education, including the positive effects on gender equity<sup>3</sup>, data show that in developing countries, these programs have low coverage, poor quality, and great difficulty reaching the most vulnerable populations ([UNICEF, 2019](#)). In Sub Saharan Africa, access to ECE varies notably across countries. While several Southern African countries, including Eswatini, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Kenya are approaching universal pre-primary access, in others such as Chad, Mauritania, and Senegal, only around one in five children attend organized learning one year before the official primary school age (CESA & SDG4 Continental report<sup>4</sup>).

Recent analyses suggest that improving access and quality of early childhood education in developing countries is hampered by a lack of planning and implementation, insufficient financial resources (from local governments and donors) and fragmented governance of the sub-sector ([KIX, 2019](#)), as well as insufficient political will, weak prioritization and leadership for implementation, and the lack of continuity in policies through electoral cycles.

However, there are few applied analyses of the political economy of expanding quality early childhood education that provide a good understanding of the factors that contribute or prevent early childhood education from becoming a policy priority. Most recent studies on ECE in developing countries focus on the technical aspects of provision without sufficient attention to the environment in which the ECE agenda is set, the programs and interventions are formulated, and the policies are implemented.

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<sup>3</sup> The specialized literature relates access to quality early childhood education to gender equality through two channels ([Crowther, 2021](#)). First, women do most of the unpaid childcare, especially in contexts in which and therefore must do more if quality ECE is not accessible ([World Economic Forum, 2021](#)). Second, women also do most of the paid childcare and education work, in functions that are often very low paid ([Peeters et al, 2016](#)).

<sup>4</sup> Forthcoming based on UIS data.

This project aims to fill this gap by analysing the factors that may facilitate or hamper quality early childhood education from becoming not only a policy priority in SSA countries, but also a financial and implementation one. The findings of this research will provide insight into promising approaches for analysing, understanding, and overcoming political economy, governance, institutional capacity, and financing challenges for scaling up quality early childhood education programs in the region.

It will also analyse whether there has been an integration of gender equity policies in motivating the expansion of ECE in SSA, how this has been done and whether this has been a factor in strengthening advocacy for better ECE policies. While research indicates that quality ECE and gender equity are closely linked because better childcare access improves mothers' integration into education, work, and economic life, in terms of policy design and implementation, it is unclear to what extent this alignment has been effective and strategic.

The findings of this research will provide key elements that will help to improve the understanding of the political economy of ECE and gender equality in GCI countries, through new insights about the processes, motivations, actors, and interests that could effectively advance them in both agendas.

### 3. Factors associated with girls' school dropout

It is estimated that in low-income countries, less than two-thirds of girls complete primary education, and only one in three complete lower secondary school ([Wodon, 2018](#)). The consequences of school dropout for girls are severe and have permanent consequences on the lives of girls and their families: as it contributes to increase the likelihood of early childbearing; decreases women's decision-making capacity and physical and psychological well-being; lowers their prospects for future education and quality employment opportunities; and increases under-five mortality and malnutrition among others.

While global dropout rates for boys and girls are only a few percentage points apart (8 for boys and 9 percent for girls), in sub-Saharan Africa the difference is twice as large: 19 percent for boys and 23 for girls. Across sub-Saharan Africa, 9 million girls will never attend school, compared to 6 million boys ([UIS, 2016](#)).

While the reasons behind girls dropping out of school have been explored before, there are few applied studies focused on better understanding the social norms and cultural barriers that impede girls' access to and participation in quality education in GCI countries. The objective of this project is to fill these gaps by conducting a study on the factors, particularly gender norms and barriers, associated with girls' access to and participation in quality education in at least two countries, Sierra Leone and Mozambique, with a view to better support ongoing education diagnosis, planning and management processes in these countries.

## **Description of work and activities**

Under the direct supervision and guidelines of IIEP's GCI and Dakar-R&D Programme Managers, and the overall supervision of IIEP Dakar's Head and Deputy Head of Office, each consultant will be responsible for the following activities:

### 1. School-related gender-based violence (40% of time dedication)

- 1.1. Contribute to a review and comparative analysis of existing measurement and data collection tools on SGBV.
- 1.2. Contribute to documenting and analysing existing public policies against SGBV in Sub-Saharan Africa and GCI countries.
- 1.3. Support the development of a measurement and data collection tool on SGBV issues relevant for education policy design, planning, and management.

- 1.4. Support the process of implementing the tool in Niger, as a pilot case, and its possible adaptation to other GCI countries.

## 2. Political economy of ECE and gender equity policy linkages (25% of time dedication)

- 2.1. Contribute to a literature review and theoretical framework on the political economy of ECE and its relation to gender equity policies.
- 2.2. Support the elaboration of the research and primary data collection instruments.
- 2.3. Support data collection, and analysis.
- 2.4. Contribute to the drafting of a preliminary results report.
- 2.5. Support validation with stake holders' activities reporting.
- 2.6. Contribute to the drafting of a final report.

## 3. Factors associated with school dropout (25% of time dedication)

- 3.1. Support a literature review on the factors associated with girls' school dropout in sub-Saharan Africa, with a focus on social norms and cultural barriers.
- 3.2. Support a quantitative analysis of girls' school dropout in Sierra Leone and Mozambique based on recent administrative and survey data (MICS, DHS, etc.).
- 3.3. Contribute to the documentation of successful policies and to reduce girls' school dropout in Sierra Leone and Mozambique. This analysis should include a review of recently developed policies, and planning and management practices and tools such as ESAs, ESPs, and similar.
- 3.4. Support the design of an empirical study on the factors associated with school dropout in Sierra Leone and Mozambique.

## 4. Other tasks (10% of time dedication)

- 4.1. Contribute to the management of GCI and Dakar-R&D projects.
- 4.2. Support the development of GCI and Dakar-R&D coordination and management activities.

### Time frame

The consultancies will run for a period of **11 months between December 2021 and November 2022**. **A full-time engagement is expected during that period**, with the exception of specific vacation periods (not to exceed a total of 5 weeks) to be agreed upon in advance with the supervisor.

### Required qualifications

- Advanced university degree (Masters or equivalent) in education, economics, social sciences, or related fields.
- Demonstrated professional experience in quantitative and/or qualitative research and report writing in education. Professional experience at the international level is an asset.
- Good knowledge of education issues in Africa. Prior knowledge and work on gender issues is an asset.
- Excellent proficiency (written and oral) in English or French. Written and oral proficiency in the other language and/or in Portuguese is an advantage.

### Application and selection process

Interested candidates should submit their application to: [ltconsultant.gcird@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:ltconsultant.gcird@iiep.unesco.org) before **December 13, 2021**. **However, they are invited to send their application as soon as possible, as they will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Suitable candidates might be selected before the above date.**

Only applications that include the following documents will be considered:

1. An updated curriculum vitae (5 pages maximum), highlighting relevant experiences, the dates when they were carried out (month and year of beginning and end) and their duration (in months).
2. A technical and financial offer (2 pages maximum), outlining the understanding of the assignments, highlighting the relevant experience, and presenting a proposed remuneration for the work (professional fees only – no other costs will be eligible).

Please direct any questions to [pdcontact@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:pdcontact@iiep.unesco.org).