

# **Terms of reference for the recruitment of a national consultant to support the GCI and R&D project “Addressing the challenges of girls' school dropout in Sierra Leone through evidence-based policymaking”**

## **Presentation**

With more than 50 years of experience contributing to strengthening the capacity of member states, IIEP-UNESCO is the only specialized organization with the mandate to support education policy, planning and management in the UN system. IIEP's Africa office (IIEP Dakar) contributes to this mission by producing rigorous analysis and data-driven evidence, developing cutting-edge analytical tools, and delivering technical assistance to identify, facilitate and promote the adoption of effective solutions to Africa's most pressing education challenges. Through its Research and Development program (R&D), IIEP-UNESCO Dakar is actively involved in the curation, generation, refinement, and expansion of bodies of knowledge for the strengthening of education decision and policy making in Africa.

At the backbone of its strategy and commitment to reducing inequalities in education, IIEP Dakar ensures the technical oversight of the Gender at the Centre Initiative – GCI. Launched in 2019 at the G7 Summit, the GCI aims to strengthen the gender mainstreaming capacities of education system stakeholders and support the development of resources to achieve gender equality in and through education. The initiative is currently being developed in eight pilot countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Chad) and seeks to expand to other countries in the region.

**GCI and Dakar-R&D are recruiting one national consultant to support the development of an evidence-generating and policy-strengthening project on girls' school dropout in Sierra Leone.**

## **Rationale and objectives**

Less than two-thirds of girls complete primary education in low-income countries, and only one in three complete lower secondary school ([Wodon, 2018](#)). The costs of school dropout are severe and have permanent consequences for girls and their families: it increases 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 many other negative implications.

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](#)).

The project “**Addressing the challenges of girls' school dropout in Sierra Leone through evidence-based policymaking**” seeks to gain a better understanding of girls' school dropout in Sierra Leone during the last years and to contribute to the design and implementation of prevention mechanisms.

This project has four specific objectives:

1. To support the generation and analysis of information and data for the measurement and monitoring of girls' school dropout, and the understanding of it as a process that can be detected and combated at early stages if monitoring systems are in place.
2. To contribute to the generation of evidence on the evolution of girl's school dropout in Sierra Leone before, during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.
3. To analyse the existence, relevance, and coherence of education policy tools available in the country which could contribute to the prevention of girls' school dropout.
4. To develop recommendations for strengthening the country's response mechanisms to the girl's dropout phenomenon.

## 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, the consultant will be responsible for the following activities:

1. Support a quantitative analysis of girls' school dropout in Sierra Leone based on recent administrative and survey data.
2. Contribute to the documentation and analysis of policies and programs aiming to reduce girls' school dropout in Sierra Leone.
3. Design, conduct, code and analyse interviews with key stakeholders to gather information on how the specific policies relating to girls' dropout are enacted, especially at the decentralized level and on how the specific plans relating to the prevention of girls' dropout are being monitored.
4. Design a research protocol and fieldwork instruments.
5. Draft a policy analysis document.
6. Draft the report's first draft.
7. Integrate comments into the report and finalize it.
8. Contribute to the dissemination of the results.

## Time frame and recruitment

The consultancy will run for a period of **10 months, with a part-time engagement, between March 2023 and December 2023, starting as soon as possible.**

## Required qualifications

- University degree (Bachelor or equivalent) in education, economics, social sciences, or related fields.
- Minimum 5 years of proven work experience.
- Professional experience in education, and good knowledge of education issues in Sierra Leone. Prior knowledge and work on gender issues is an asset.
- Demonstrated analytical skills and professional experience conducting quantitative and/or qualitative analysis/research. Experience working with mixed methods is desirable.
- Experience working with government officials or other high-level authorities. Previous professional experience with the Ministry of Education of Sierra Leone is a plus.
- Proven skills in producing high quality written documents and report.

- Excellent proficiency (written and oral) in English.
- Residence in Sierra Leone.
- Ability to work independently and collaborate with colleagues to achieve organizational and team goals.
- Professional experience at the international level is an asset.

### Application and selection process

**Interested candidates should submit their application to: [GCI.consultant@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:GCI.consultant@iiep.unesco.org) before February 28<sup>th</sup> 2023.**

Please include the words GSD-SL in the subject line of the email, along with your last name (for example GSD-SL-Smith).

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. The consultant may be selected before the date indicated above.

Only applications that include the following documents will be considered:

- 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).
- A technical and financial offer (2 pages maximum), outlining the understanding of the assignments, highlighting the relevant experience, and presenting a proposed remuneration (professional fees only – no other costs will be eligible).

The applications that do not include this information will not be considered for the following phases of the counting process.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews.