Terms of Reference for an Early Childhood Consultant for Liberia
2018

Overview

Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), in partnership with the Open Society Foundation's Early Childhood Program (ECP), seeks to increase the quality, access, and comprehensiveness of early childhood services for all children – particularly marginalised children - through a strategy focused on improving public policies and programmes, and building the capacity of Early Childhood Development (ECD) professionals in Liberia.

To date, the programme has contributed to a number of successes including the provision of core support to develop: a comprehensive ECD policy; a national professional framework for ECD; core materials to allow implementation of that national framework and; training programmes for communities and professionals that come into contact with young children and their families including community health care workers, mental health professionals and pre-primary teachers. The focus now is on continuing to embed these materials and efforts within the Liberian system, to ensure that more young children get a better start in life.

Purpose and Objectives of this consultancy

The overall purpose of this consultancy is to provide technical assistance to government and OSIWA/ECP grantees, supporting OSIWA/ECP's aims to improve early childhood provision in Liberia. The types of activities required are listed below, but the specific activities may change. Work to be conducted will be agreed in advance with OSIWA in collaboration with the OSF Early Childhood Program.

- **Provide technical assistance to the Bureau of Early Childhood Education (BECE) of the Ministry of Education.**
  This technical assistance will focus on:
  - ➢ Building capacity through supporting ministry to develop administrative systems and early childhood trainings. This should include building the registry that documents professional development status of pre-primary educators and resources.
  - ➢ Supporting the BECE to develop tools to ensure awareness of available early childhood resources and how to use them. This should include supporting the development of measurable Key Performance Indicators, ensuring that the BECE has standard methods to systematically document, share, and publish best practices and produce tools to share and enable scaling.
  - ➢ The consultant will support collaboration with other teams within the Ministry of Education, other relevant Ministries, private sector providers and other Liberian stakeholders.
  - ➢ Engaging strategically in the implementation of the new GPE grant to Liberia to ensure BECE are monitoring and supporting the ECD work if requested by OSIWA. The consultant may be asked to provide advice and in-person explanations. If required this will be confirmed in advance by OSIWA.

  All of the time allocated to the above deliverables will be agreed in advance.

- **Explore options for the development of a resource centre for early childhood** *Estimated: up to 3 days*

➢ Discuss the creation of a resource centre for early childhood with the Ministry of Education, other relevant Ministries to include the Ministry of Health and other ECD stakeholders and donors, to include UNICEF and OSIWA.
➢ Produce a 4 page document describing different alternatives for the creation of the ECD resource centre, including where it could be based, where resources could be sourced from, what resources should be included and who should manage the centre.

- **Monitor and Support ECP grantees**
    ➢ Visit the Family Literacy Initiative and provide an update to ECP. Discuss opportunities to sustain and expand the initiative through funding from the MoE GPE grant with relevant ECD stakeholders
    ➢ Visit ECP grantee We-Care and meet with them about implementation of their grant.
    ➢ Meet regularly with grantee Big Belly Business and Public Health in Liberia. If requested by OSIWA, monitor the evaluation process and provide feedback on documents as requested
    ➢ Attend ECD network meetings relevant to ECP grantees.
    ➢ Meet other potential or new grantees as requested by ECP.
    ➢ Produce a 5-10 page briefing for ECP mapping out the ECD civil society sector. It should include Liberian organisations working in ECD and describe their areas of programmatic interest, approximate organisation size, current geographical areas of work and current engagement with government and other stakeholders.

- **Identify new partnerships for ECD and also strengthen existing partnerships to ensure better co-ordination in the sector**.
    Working with Barbara Kamara, the consultant is expected to encourage partnership collaboration and development with other Government Ministries, Development Partners, Implementation agencies, National NGOs, FBOs, Private ECD providers, Higher Education Institutions and Liberia's Rural Teacher Training Programmes. This will include coordinating consistent documentation across multiple stakeholders. The consultant will attend and help to organise meetings with OSIWA of key individuals working in ECD, including participants at the 2017 Harvard scaling up in ECD course, Liberian graduates of the University of Haifa ECD program and other key individuals identified by ECP, OSIWA or by the consultant. Support the development of new early child development initiatives in Liberia, for instance the nurturing care framework.

- **Provide ECP and OSIWA staff with regular updates on how the programme is progressing and also advise ECP staff on how to ensure that the programme is delivering efficiently and effectively**.
    Specifically the consultant is expected to provide OSIWA and ECP with monthly, written update reports. The consultant will also support efforts to monitor and evaluate the impact of OSIWA/ECP's work in Liberia.

- **Attend a conference focusing on young children in Liberia in 2018 or 2019 and, if required, provide feedback to the Ministry of Education on the conference content**
    ➢ Provide input on the proposed agenda as requested by OSIWA/ECP.
    ➢ Attend the conference and feedback to OSIWA and ECP
    ➢ Ensure collaboration with other government teams outside of MoE, particularly the Ministries of Health, Gender and Finance.

- **Further activities are likely to be requested based on the early childhood strategy decided by OSIWA and OSF's Early Childhood Program, such as activities relating to the Nurturing Care Framework (see http://nurturing-care.org/), activities relating to the development of ECD higher education courses or advocacy initiatives.**

Other Expectations

The consultant should:

1. Have significant experience of the Liberian context. Preference will be given to consultants currently based in Liberia and willing to travel frequently in and around Monrovia and in the rural areas.
2. Have an understanding of early childhood, and preferably a minimum of 5 years work experience in early childhood or a closely related field, such as education, health or social protection.
3. Work closely with the Open Society Initiative for West Africa Liberia office and ECP's consultant (Barbara Kamara) in delivering the above. The consultant will be based at the OSIWA office (details to be agreed) and will be supervised by with Massa Crayton, OSIWA Liberia Country Officer.

Payment Terms & Schedule

This will be a fixed-term 12-month position with the possibility of extension. It is expected that consultancy will be required to work part-time at 50% of a full-time equivalent post but the time commitment and arrangement can be negotiated. The role will be based in the OSIWA office.

To Apply: send resume (in English), cover letter and salary requirements, to: **osiwa-monrovia@osiwa.org** **Include** job code in subject line: **Early Childhood Consultant for Liberia-OSIWA;** **Deadline for submission: January 15, 2019 @ 12:00noon**

Note: Due to the number of applications we receive, only underlined applicants will be contacted by OSIWA.
No phone calls, please. The Open Society Foundations are an Equal Opportunity Employer. Females are encouraged to apply.

Note: *OSIWA reserves the right to make any necessary modification to this position in the light of changes that may occur.*