**ANNEX B : TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Background**

Three types of School Improvement Grants (SIG) were implemented in 2020 and these are; the Regular SIG and Complementary Funding. SIG project aims at making operational a national school grants programme which provides financially constrained schools with enough resources to address their most basic needs and meet a minimum set of school functionality criteria with the aim of improving the quality of teaching and learning at the school level and eliminating user fee costs for vulnerable students. The expectation is that this process will lead to a phased reduction in compulsory parental education costs, especially for the poor and vulnerable. In addition, by investing resources at the school level it is hoped that a ‘whole school approach’ will be strengthened encompassing issues related to teaching and learning and community involvement in the school. A ‘whole school approach’ entails that the community, school authorities and children will assess the key challenges and barriers to school effectiveness and develop a School Development Plan (SDP) to prioritise problem areas, set out solutions to the problems and strategies to realise those changes.

The grants are disbursed directly to dedicated school bank accounts from UNICEF account, and will be used to address issues of access, quality, governance and resourcing within the context of specific needs articulated in the SDP. This plan may include issues such as ensuring access to quality education to pupils coming from the most marginalised households and to those with special education needs. The plan may also focus on the improvement of quality of teaching in classrooms, materials provision (core and non-core teaching and learning materials), improvement of school facilities and effective school resource management. Under Regular SIG, grants disbursed to each selected school annually will fund different components of non-salary and non-personnel needs that will be in the School Development Plans (SDPs) and therefore potentially be covered by a school grants programme. These are broadly:

* Teaching and learning materials;
* Classroom furniture
* Special needs provision (improved access and security for children with disabilities)
* School running costs
* Water and Sanitation
* Income generating activities to support school

The second type of SIG; Complementary Funding focusses on construction of classrooms and laboratories.

The third type of SIG is emergency wash aimed at water point rehabilitation and promoting access to water by learners and children.

**Justification**

While the MoPSE, UNICEF and donors will carry out joint monitoring visits to schools, an independent entity (an accounting firm) will be contracted to conduct independent verifications of School Improvement Grants (SIG) management at school level. Ten percent of the targeted schools receiving SIG will be targeted. The prime purpose of independent verifications is to ensure that any departure from the financial management procedures and the misuse or misappropriation of funds by schools and districts is identified and corrective action taken, up to and including disciplinary or legal action and restitution. In addition to the verifications, rapid assessments will be conducted to ensure that implementation is consistent to the financial management procedures as well as checking the prevailing economic conditions which affects the value of money.

The activity is in the AWP 5.1.1: ***School Improvement Grants (SIG): Implement a school improvement grants (SIG) programme (grant disbursement, verification, monitoring, and SDP development).***

**Specific Tasks**

The verification agency will carry out verifications at 10% of the schools that received SIG in 2020 and 2021 and rapid assessments will be conducted at 50 schools randomly selected. This applies to all the three types of SIG mentioned above. Random selection of target schools per each province will be carried out jointly by MoPSE and UNICEF.

Depending with the situation, the verification and rapid assessment process will adopt either in situ verification (physical visits) or remote data collection. Therefore, the audit firm is required to outline their approaches for remote verification and for physical visits and this include the fees involved, two options should be provided,

An independent audit firm is expected to:

1. **Conduct Verification for all three types of SIG, Regular SIG, Complementary funding & WASH Emergency SIG and 10% for each type of SIG.**
2. Independently verify disbursements and expenditure of the school grants to at least 10% randomly selected (per province) beneficiary schools per each type of SIG.
3. Independently verify use of school grants disbursed to the schools including physical verification of the goods and services procured.
4. Ensure, through *in situ* verification/remote data collection of financial records and use of funds, that:
   1. GoZ financial and procurement policies and procedures for disbursement and expenditure of funds are being followed.
   2. Funds are spent only in line with eligibility criteria and as outlined in the School Development Plan (SDP) or the requisite approval.
   3. All financial monitoring and reporting requirements are being met accurately and in good time.
   4. All funds are fully accounted for, and there is no misuse or misappropriation of funds.
   5. Sampled receipts (at least 3 invoices per school) and expenditures are supported by appropriate documentation as required.

4. To assess compliance of SIG management with internal policies and procedures.

5. The agency will be required to create a database comprising the 10% of schools verified.

6. The agency will be expected to carry out capacity building on areas of weaknesses identified at the school verified.

1. **Conduct Rapid assessments of regular SIG and Complementary Funding-50 schools randomly selected on a quarterly basis.**
2. Conduct rapid assessments to verify disbursements and implementation progress to at least 50 randomly selected from the beneficiary schools for Regular SIG and Complementary funding.
3. Assess the market situation and establish the challenges encountered by schools in procurement and accessing the funds from the banks.
4. Assess utilization of school grants disbursed to the schools including physical verification of the goods and services procured.
5. Ensure, through *in situ* verification/remote data collection of financial records and use of funds, that:

* GoZ financial and procurement policies and procedures for disbursement and expenditure of funds are being followed.
* Funds are spent only in line with eligibility criteria and as outlined in the School Development Plan (SDP) or the requisite approval.
* All financial monitoring and reporting requirements are being met accurately and in good time.
* All funds are fully accounted for, and there is no misuse or misappropriation of funds.
* Sampled receipts and expenditures are supported by appropriate documentation as required.

**Methodology for SIG Verification**

**A consolidated tool containing general questions for all types of SIG and specific questions to cater for the different types of SIG will be shared with the independent firm.**

The audit agency will specifically:

1. Based on the list of schools receiving school improvement grants, formulate and submit to MoPSE and UNICEF a work plan for agreement on field visit time frame/schedule or remote data collection timeframe.
2. Review the existing SIG verification tool with the MoPSE and UNICEF.
3. Develop a consolidated tool for rapid assessments for both Regular SIG and Complementary Funding
4. Conduct an induction to the field teams on both assessment and verification of SIG types with the support of MoPSE and UNICEF.
5. Working together with the MoPSE and UNICEF, deploy teams to the respective schools in all districts in liaison with the responsible District Schools Inspector (DSI).
6. DSIs to participate in the verification exercise and rapid assessment; at least the first 2 schools per district.
7. Review the internal control systems including segregation of duties used by the school to receive, record, and disburse the school improvement grants provided by UNICEF through interviews and review of SDPs;
8. Determine whether periodicity of FACE Form submission was in accordance with the planned timeline and whether requests for disbursement and reports on utilization of funds were provided for activity described in SDP.
9. Review of progress reports prepared by the school to establish whether activities were implemented as planned. Where activities (timelines, type, quantity) deviated significantly from the original SDP, establish whether this was by mutual agreement between school, MoPSE and UNICEF. Determine and comment on the causes for significant delays or changes, if any.
10. Collect data on purchasing power of the grants disbursed:
11. Gather information on the functionality of Nostro accounts detailing challenges encountered by schools.
12. Assess the purchasing power of schools in light of transactions made by schools.
13. Assess whether schools have been able to transact with service providers that do not have Nostro accounts.
14. Identify schools that obtained quotes in both RTGs & USD before procurement.
15. Explore any banking challenges by schools using Nostro Accounts
16. Identify challenges encountered by schools due to not having cash at hand.
17. Review a sample (at least 3 invoices) of the expenditures recorded in the Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures (FACE) forms issued during the period under review, to:
    1. assess whether they were signed by designated officials of the schools,
    2. assess whether SIG funds received were deposited into the Implementing Partner’s dedicated bank account by verifying the bank statement,
    3. to reconcile the expenditure totals, per activity, on the FACE forms to the list of individual transactions (i.e. the Implementing Partner’s accounting records)
    4. review the nature of expenditure (for each activity), and assess their reasonableness, and
    5. review process of payment and level of segregation of duties.
    6. Review support documentation to validate against physical evidence where appropriate
    7. Discuss any concerns with management.
18. To establish whether DSIs play a role in the procurement processes by the schools using the grant
19. Review the processes used by the school for authorizing expenditures and assess whether they are in accordance with the SDPs
20. Review the process of procurement/contracting for supplies and services and assess whether it is transparent and competitive and consistent with the financial management guidelines.
21. Review the achievement of expected results (Outputs and Outcomes) based on the evidence of data sources, reports provided, and physical inspection of any works carried out, services or goods procured;
22. Address capacity building needs identified during the verification exercise by walking the school administration staff through areas that need improvement such as bank reconciliations, proper maintenance of cash books and ledgers and endorsing ‘PAID’ on SIG vouchers.
23. Document good practices in the use of SIG in services for children with disabilities, income generation, construction, management of funds and learning resources.
24. Hold an exit meeting with the schools and districts at the end of the verification visit to share and get feedback on findings, observations and recommendations;
25. Prepare and submit to school and UNICEF final reports, no more than one month after the field visits to the school, in order to share findings and recommendations;
26. Prepare a fraud risk matrix with the exceptions for the different elements relating to SIG verification e.g. inadequately accounting for SIG funds, finance committee not approving payments, not stamping paid on invoices, cashbook and bank reconciliations, FACE forms and petty cash categorized.  Then assign scores to each deviation based on the fraud risk likelihood of each exception and sum up the deviations per school and rank the schools according to the “Fraud Propensity Score”.
27. Submit a final overall general report to UNICEF containing a summary of major strengths and major thematic weaknesses and relevant recommendations and mitigation measures to address or compensate for the weaknesses in the short term and recommendations to resolve/eliminate the internal control and performance weaknesses noted, including recommendation of short- and medium-term capacity development measures.

**Expected Deliverables**

The verification and rapid assessment reports provide feedback on the implementation of the SIG and will impact on future school grants interventions and policy decisions. The process will result in enhanced project implementation and enhanced financial management at the school level. Below are the key deliverables for Verification exercise:

1. Verification reports for each school according to agreed template. The report should be signed and stamped by the school and reflects the exit meeting with the school, findings, observations, recommendations and capacity building conducted during the verification visit;
2. Exit meeting with the District Schools Inspectors on major findings and recommendations for schools in the district. The meeting should also discuss cases of suspected fraud;
3. Report on good practices in the use of SIG in services for children with disabilities, income generation, construction, management of funds and learning resources.
4. Report on the major findings of the verification among the sample. It should show major strengths and major thematic weaknesses and relevant recommendations and mitigation measures to address or compensate for the weaknesses in the short term and recommendations to resolve or eliminate the internal control and performances weaknesses noted. Where cases of suspected fraud are identified, it should provide detailed information on the basis of the suspicion and any additional information garnered from the district.
5. Database on verification findings.
6. Fraud risk matrix using the “Fraud Propensity Score” for each deviation based on the fraud risk likelihood of each exception.
7. Reports of Feedback meetings with Head Office, Provincial and District personnel.

**Methodology for Rapid Assessment**

**A tool containing questions for all types of SIG will be shared with the independent firm.**

The audit agency will specifically:

1. Based on the list of schools receiving school improvement grants, formulate and submit to MoPSE and UNICEF a work plan for agreement on field visit time frame/schedule.
2. Review the existing rapid assessments tool for both Regular SIG and Complementary Funding
3. Collect data on purchasing power of the grants disbursed:
4. Gather information on the functionality of Nostro accounts detailing challenges encountered by schools.
5. Assess the purchasing power of schools in light of transactions made by schools.
6. Assess whether schools have been able to transact with service providers that do not have Nostro accounts.
7. Identify schools that obtained quotes in both RTGs & USD before procurement.
8. Explore any banking challenges by schools using Nostro Accounts
9. Identify challenges encountered by schools due to not having cash at hand.
10. Highlight how the current economic situation is impacting the schools’ use of SIG and the challenges faced in utilizing these funds
11. Review the process of procurement/contracting for supplies and services and assess whether it is transparent and competitive and consistent with the financial management guidelines.
12. Establish whether DSIs play a role in the procurement processes by the schools using the grant.
13. Prepare and submit to UNICEF final report, no more than one month after the field visits to the school, in order to share findings and recommendations.
14. **Overally, the Rapid Assessment report should highlight challenges the schools faced in utilizing their funds and the potential risks as the result of these challenges and how they can be mitigated through your recommendations.**

**Key deliverables for Rapid Assessment:**

1. Report on the major findings of the assessment among the sample. It should outline the challenges faced by schools, potential risks and mitigation measures to address the challenges being encountered and recommendations to improve SIG management.
2. Database on rapid assessment findings.

The Verification and Rapid Assessment will be conducted as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description** | **When** |
| **2020 verification** | May 2021 |
| **Rapid Assessment** | May 2021 |
| **2021 Verification** | September 2021 |

**Number of schools to be verified and frequency**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **# of schools** |  |  | **Frequency** |
| 2020 SIG Verification | 548 |  |  | 1.00 |
| 2021 SIG Verification | 617 |  |  | 1.00 |
| 2021 Rapid Assessment | 50 |  |  | 1.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Payment Terms**

All terms and conditions will be reflected in the contract to be signed by UNICEF, and the audit firm. Payment will be done against the submission of deliverables and according to the payment schedule as below

**2020 SIG Disbursement Verification**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Deliverable** | **Timeline** | **Budget** |
| 1 | Work plan including schedule and draft tools for use in verification exercise. | 20 May 2021 | 8% of consultancy fees |
| 2 | Draft of overall report on findings of the 2020 verification. | 30 June 2021 | 12% of consultancy fees |
| 3 | Final verification report which reflects feedback from UNICEF and MoPSE to the draft report, a power point presentation of the findings and hard and soft copies of signed and stamped school verification reports for 10% of schools verified (reflecting completion of exit meetings with schools and districts, recommendations and capacity building conducted during the verification exercise), documentation on good practices. | 20 July 2021 | 20% of consultancy fees |

**Rapid Assessment**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Deliverable** | **Timeline** | **Budget** |
| 1 | Final report of Rapid Assessment | 30 June 2021 | 20% of consultancy fees |

**2021 SIG Disbursement Verification**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Deliverable** | **Timeline** | **Budget** |
| 1 | Work plan including schedule and draft tools for use in verification exercise. | 01 September 2021 | 8% of consultancy fees |
| 2 | Draft of overall report on findings of the 2020 verification. | 10 October 2021 | 12% of consultancy fees |
| 3 | Final verification report which reflects feedback from UNICEF and MoPSE to the draft report, a power point presentation of the findings and hard and soft copies of signed and stamped school verification reports for 10% of schools verified (reflecting completion of exit meetings with schools and districts, recommendations and capacity building conducted during the verification exercise), documentation on good practices. | 10 November 2021 | 20% of consultancy fees |

**2021 Rapid Assessment**

**Reporting**

The contract will be up to 31 December 2021 subject to satisfactory performance of set deliverables. Specific details on the timelines are indicated in the tables above.

**Evaluation Criteria**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Technical Proposal** | **Points** |
| 1. **OVERALL RESPONSE**  * Understanding of UNICEF’s needs and responsiveness to the requirements. * Understanding of scope, objectives and completeness of response. * Overall concord between RFP requirements and proposal. | **5** |
| 1. **STRATEGY, METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH**  * Quality of proposed approach/ methodology. * Quality of proposed implementation plan, i.e. how the bidder will undertake each task and maintenance of project schedules. * Recognition of direct risks/peripheral issues and methods to prevent and manage risks/peripheral issues. | **20** |
| 1. **PROPOSED TEAM AND PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION**  * Structure of Management Team. * Team leader: relevant experience, qualifications and position with bidder. * Team members: relevant experience of similar scope and complexity qualifications. * Professional expertise and knowledge. * Quality of local partner(s) included as sub-contractor(s), if applicable. | **20** |
| 1. **Evidence-supported TECHNICAL CAPACITY and ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE**  * Range and depth of experience with similar projects, contracts and clients. * Financial status of Institution. * Evidence of similar assignments undertaken in the region, Africa and elsewhere. * Availability of PSEA policy and PSEA Certified members * Duty of care for prevention against spread of COVID19   NOTE: Institutions that fail to submit relevant documentation that will enable a thorough review of the Institution in all relevant areas, do so at their own risk and will be subject to disqualification or penalty of reduced points. The assessment of the Institution will be made on the basis of documents submitted for review in the Proposal. | **15** |
| **Total technical marks** | **60** |
| **Financial Proposal** |  |
| 1. **FINANCIAL**   Assessment/review will include:   * Overall Price. * Cost benefit comparison related to number and quality of personnel in the Proposal who will conduct the spot check or verifications (financial assessments). * Completeness of the Financial Proposal (ensure that all costs, including professional fees, costs of travel, salaries, insurance, etc. are included in the price offered). * Payment terms/schedule of payment proposed. * Timeline proposed. * Period of validity of Proposal.   NOTE: As the most financially attractive offers will be at an advantage, if the Institution can offer any discounts or options, they should be clearly marked in the financial proposal to facilitate the comparison. | **40** |
| **TOTAL MARKS** | **100** |

Technical Proposal (s) scoring 70 % (=Score of 42 out of 60) or more following Proposal Evaluation will be listed and included for review of Analysis and Evaluation on The Financial Offer

**Financial template**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Verifications (2020 and 2021)** | **Rapid Assessments**  **(2021)** |
| Number of Schools | 1165.00 | 50.00 |
| Frequency | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Schools per Verification/Rapid Assessment | 1165.00 | 50.00 |
|  |  |  |
| Two methodologies (one in situ verification and remote data collection) |  |  |
| Days in field |  |  |
| Man Days (no of field officers - verifications) / (no of field officers - rapid assessments) |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Fieldwork** |  |  |
| Average Time per School (days) |  |  |
| Average Time per School (hours) |  |  |
| Time estimate (hours) per school, including travelling time |  |  |
| Time estimate (hours) per school, excluding travelling time |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Reporting** |  |  |
| Draft to Final - (Working Days) |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Note** |  |  |
| The time estimates above apply to 2020 and 2021 verifications and 2021 rapid assessments. | | |
| *NB: Travelling time is approximate because it depends on the nature of roads and how close schools are to each other* | | |

Financial proposal submission template is attached as Annex 1 (A and B)

**Expected background and Experience**

This is an institutional consultancy. For institutions not based in Zimbabwe, they will be required to partner with a local institution.

The audit firm will be a reputable professional auditing and /or accounting firm based in Zimbabwe. The company will have capacity to carry out verification of use of SIG using the UN’s Harmonised Cash Transfer approach to all the target schools as outlined in these TORs and will be familiar with GoZ policies and procedures in the areas of financial and procurement management.

The audit firm—which must have a designated leader--should include the following competencies:

**Required**

* The team must include members with accounting and audit qualifications with demonstrated Knowledge in Government Public Finance procedures.
* The team leader must have at least 10 years’ experience in audit and 2 years relevant experience in the proposed area of assignment.
* Demonstrated experience in undertaking capacity building assignments of similar nature.
* Proven expertise in the use of participatory, qualitative and quantitative assessment/analytic methodologies; and,
* Proven technical competence in qualitative data analysis
* Excellent analytical and report writing skills
* Fluency in spoken and written English and local languages
* Experience in working with UN or similar agencies

**Other Considerations**

* The number and profile of the consulting team members will be proposed by the proposers in order that the team size, experience, qualifications, references, mix and complementarity of expertise, availability and level of effort is convincing that the proposed objectives of the consultancy can be met.
* The number of persons and the level of effort of the respective senior, intermediate level and junior experts should be appropriate and ensure a high quality and timely process;
* A strong commitment to delivering timely and high-quality results--i.e. evidence of similar work—is highly desirable;

**Supervision and Reporting**

The selected verification agency will work under the strategic guidance of the UNICEF Chief of Education or designated representative.

The audit firm will however be required to closely liaise with the SIG Team from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

The audit firm will be responsible for all their travel arrangements and cost as well as provision of computers and associated work equipment and space.

All deliverables will have to be approved by UNICEF for payment. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in the event that the deliverables do not meet its requirement.

**MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The audit firm will be responsible for ensuring that the consultancy is undertaken as described in these terms of reference and in their proposal. The consulting team leader, more specifically, will be in charge of the following:

* Oversight and management of team members.
* Managing communications with UNICEF and the Consulting team
* Ensuring adequate workspace, work equipment, accommodation, travel, food, security and insurance arrangement to all consultant members and other relevant service providers.
* Meeting deadlines and ensuring the quality of all products and deliverables,
* Leading the authorship of all reports
* Designing of workshops and trainings

UNICEF will manage the contract with the selected verification agency as follows:

* Manage all contractual aspects with the consultant
* Provide and facilitate introductions to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
* Approving submitted work for payment upon verification that the work meets the Terms of Reference (ToR) and is of satisfactory quality

**General Conditions: Procedures and Logistics**

The assignment involves frequent trips within Zimbabwe to cover assessments, monitoring of rehabilitation works, etc. The consulting institution should cover all costs related to transportation and accommodation/ Daily Subsistence Allowances (DSA) in its financial proposal.

**Annex 1- (A) Financial template for Number of schools to be verified and frequency**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **# of schools** | **Unit cost** | **Total cost** | **Frequency** |
| 2020 SIG Verification | 548 |  |  | 1.00 |
| 2021 SIG Verification | 617 |  |  | 1.00 |
| 2021 Rapid Assessment | 50 |  |  | 1.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Annex 1- (B) Financial template including cost per activity**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Verifications**  **(2020 and 2021)** | **Rapid Assessments (2021)** |
| Number of Schools | 1165.00 | 50.00 |
| Frequency | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Schools per Verification/Rapid Assessment | 1165.00 | 50.00 |
|  |  |  |
| Days in field |  |  |
| Man Days (no of field officers - verifications) / (no of field officers - rapid assessments) |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Fieldwork** |  |  |
| Average Time per School (days) |  |  |
| Average Time per School (hours) |  |  |
| Time estimate (hours) per school, including travelling time |  |  |
| Time estimate (hours) per school, excluding travelling time |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Reporting** |  |  |
| Draft to Final - (Working Days) |  |  |

Note

The time estimates above apply to 2020 and 2021 verifications and 2021 rapid assessments.

NB: Travelling time is an approximate because it depends on the nature of roads and how close schools are to each other