

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Request for proposal:** Technical support in developing the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Documentation and a Costed Scale Up Strategy in Nigeria

**Assignment:** Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Documentation and Costed Scale Up Strategy

**Estimated budget:** xxxxUSD

**Budget Source:**

**Location:** National

**Duration:** 6 months

**Estimate number of working days:** 100 days

**Start date:** March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

**End date:** June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Reporting to:** UNICEF Education Programme Manager

**Closing date for proposals:**

**1. JUSTIFICATION/BACKGROUND**

In the stir of dwindling resources and competing national priorities, quality education both in and outside school environment needs to be positioned as a top agenda for the government and other critical stakeholders. Within this context and given Nigeria's demographic trends and population size, improved investments in quality education serves to contribute to the attainment of children rights, support children in reaching their full potential and enhance overall national human capital development. However, attaining quality foundational literacy and numeracy by all children across school grades is an increasing challenge to the education system in Nigeria particularly in the northern region where poverty and insecurity has compounded the situation in recent times

Notwithstanding, over the last two decades, Nigeria has made great strides in improving access to quality education which has increased Primary and Junior Secondary school enrollment and reduced the number of out-of-school children (from 39% in 2017 to 32% in 2021<sup>1</sup>). Children who start behind tend to stay behind throughout their school years. The draft New Education Policy (2019) also acknowledges children in primary schools are failing to attain basic skills such as foundational literacy and numeracy- which indicates a severe learning crisis in Nigeria. The considerable number of children with severe deficits in foundational

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learning and skills acquisition in early years of schooling coupled with large regional and inter-district variations and significant social and gender gaps are potentially impacting Nigeria's development as well as global competitiveness.

Millions of children and young people of Nigeria are not developing the skills required to break out of poverty. The ability to read, write, and perform basic operations with numbers is a necessary foundation and indispensable prerequisite for all future schooling and lifelong learning. Suppose the foundational learning skills are not developed strongly among children in the early years. In that case, they will find it very difficult to catch up in the subsequent grades. Their academic performance continues to remain poor in the later years and thus will be at the risk of dropping out of school even without completing Junior Secondary grades. Therefore, it is important to improve foundational learning skills for children to stay in Junior Secondary school and transition to secondary levels.

The abruptness of the COVID-19 pandemic and the following long school closure have further worsened the status of learning in the country and negatively impacted the children's ability to acquire foundational literacy and numeracy skills. In response to this situation, governments, private sector and key education stakeholders are making efforts to promote continued learning and bridge potential learning gaps that have been on the rise including the introduction and acceleration of some key continuity of learning programs from large-scale, low tech solutions that do not require internet-enabled devices (take-home learning materials, radio and television), to high tech alternatives (virtual classrooms, video conferencing, animated lessons and online resources libraries) that require internet-enabled devices.

**Foundational skills** consist of literacy (read, write, communicate and listen), numeracy (use, interpret and communicate mathematical information) skills that everyone needs regardless of their employment status or aspirations. They are essential for engaging in further learning and formal employment and for civic involvement. (Hanushek and Woessmann, 2007).

**Transferable skills (21st century skills, life skills)** such as communication, creativity, problem-solving and team-work are those that everyone needs to function effectively at home, in school and the community. UNICEF's definition of transferable skills is underpinned by recognition of the four dimensions of learning: cognitive dimension (learning to know), instrumental dimension (learning to do), individual dimension (learning to be), and social dimension (learning to live together).

**Digital skills** are skills that allow young people to participate positively, safely and effectively on the web and in other forms of media and to utilize the opportunities offered by technology. Digital literacy includes the ability to use technologies to navigate the digital space safely and productively.

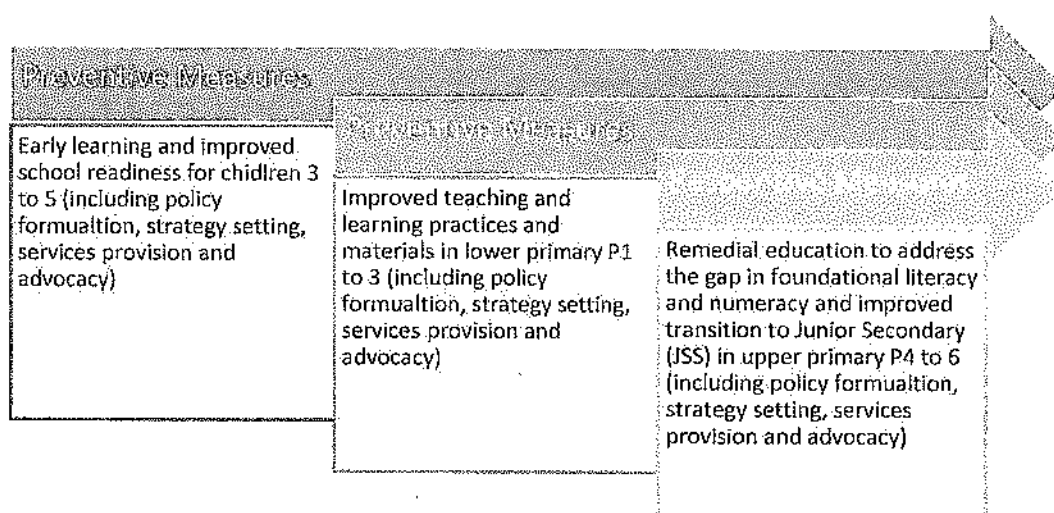
Over the past few years, UNICEF has shifted its focus to further support the government and partners in the scale-up of workable models such as Teaching at Right Level (TaRL), Reading and Numeracy Activities (RANA) for the acquisition of foundational learning skills and grade-appropriate learning among the Nigeria's children. These two models have been successfully implemented in a number of states with growing evidence on their effectiveness and suitability to the Nigerian learning context. Additional programs that promote early learning have been introduced through a number of flexible modalities, including a clear focus on community engagement and mobilization in support of early childhood education and development.

In light of the above, UNICEF is planning to further solidify and position its support to the acquisition of the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy skills in Nigeria through an informed costed scale up strategy that can serve as a road map for the key policy implementation, advocacy, and resource mobilization document for decisions makers in the Government of Nigeria, UNICEF, and partners, in addressing the learning crisis and improving foundational literacy and numeracy among children, both inside and outside of schools, while introducing innovative approach and expanding the skills agenda to equally include transferrable and digital skills.

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

This strategy aims to make available to UNICEF and its partners in Nigeria, a modelled investment framework based on different scenarios utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data, when possible. This will help to inform future investment gains through increased support for learning in Nigeria. The results of this strategy will be used to support advocacy with the Government of Nigeria and development partners to stimulate more interventions to address the learning crisis and support the children and young people in Nigeria to learn and reach their full potentials.

The strategy will explore the cost and benefits of investments in learning based on different scenarios. It will identify a potential investment package of interventions across 3 key domains of learning: **early learning, strengthened teaching and learning in the early grades, and remedial education**. The strategy will explore core interventions needed to ensure learning for all - both in school settings and out of school and community-based learning settings, in both development and humanitarian contexts. Based on evidence generated, this work will also propose key advocacy messages that can support a sensitization campaign of actors (Government, Donors and NGOs) for increased and harmonized investment in quality learning for all.



The key activities under the strategy development will start with a **full-fledged documentation of the different learning models introduced and promoted by UNICEF** under different contextual realities and across different regions. This will include, but not limited to, 1) mapping of different FLN related interventions and programming by different development partners, civil society organizations, and governments across the above specified three domains of learning, 2) documentation of UNICEF's early learning programs and its community learning centers, 3) documentation of RANA program, its progress thus far, and its effectiveness, usability, and suitability for the Nigerian context as a key intervention aiming at strengthening teaching and learning practices inside the classroom, including its language specific adaptation in Hausa or Kanuri (i.e. HASKE, KARI, etc), and 3) documentation of TaRL implementation and roll out in the program's targeted states. The aim of this exercise is to draw a comprehensive landscape of the different FLN programs as introduced and endorsed by UNICEF and its key partners. This will include qualitative research and data collection through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with UNICEF technical officers, leads from partner implementation agencies, and officials and executives from the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), State Ministries of Education (some), State Universal Basic Education Bureau (SUBEB), teachers, School Support Officers, school principals, SBMC, House Committees on Education (Lawmakers), parents, among others. Available quantitative secondary data can also further strengthen the exercise where possible and when made accessible by the Government's partners.

Second, the strategy, in consultation with relevant UNICEF's education program leads and leadership from FME and UBEC, and based on evidence on effectiveness and usability as generated in the first stage, will incorporate an intervention roadmap, identifying core and complementary intervention packages, including consideration of the use of technology to enable the acquisition of FLN, when applicable, at the different stages of the learning journey ( 3 to 5, 6 to 8, and 9 to 12), both in schools and out of school settings, which can render the best outcomes possible with regards to learning and acquisition of foundational literacy and numeracy skills, including an investment case<sup>2</sup> building on cost benefit analysis.

Third, a scale up strategy that will include a complete stakeholder mapping and identification of potential models of federal and state financing to scale up FLN within the state specific education sector planning and financing, will be developed. The strategy should include clear recommendations on planning, budgeting and cash release, data, curriculum, materials, teacher development, assessment...etc. The costing exercise must focus on what exists in the fiscus, appropriation and budget documents, repurposing of existing line items and avoid, as much as possible, the introduction of completely new budget line items for which state might not have available funds. The suggested state financing models should include 1) a low investment model for states with limited resources, 2) a medium investment model for states with medium financing resources, and 3) a high investment model for states with high financing resources. Across all models, contextual factors such as humanitarian versus development context, socio-economic indicators, availability of support funds from development partners...etc should be taken into consideration. Local community owned resources that can be

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<sup>2</sup> UNICEF has conducted an investment case for ECCDE recently and the investment case of the FLN is expected to build on this document and integrate in its strategy

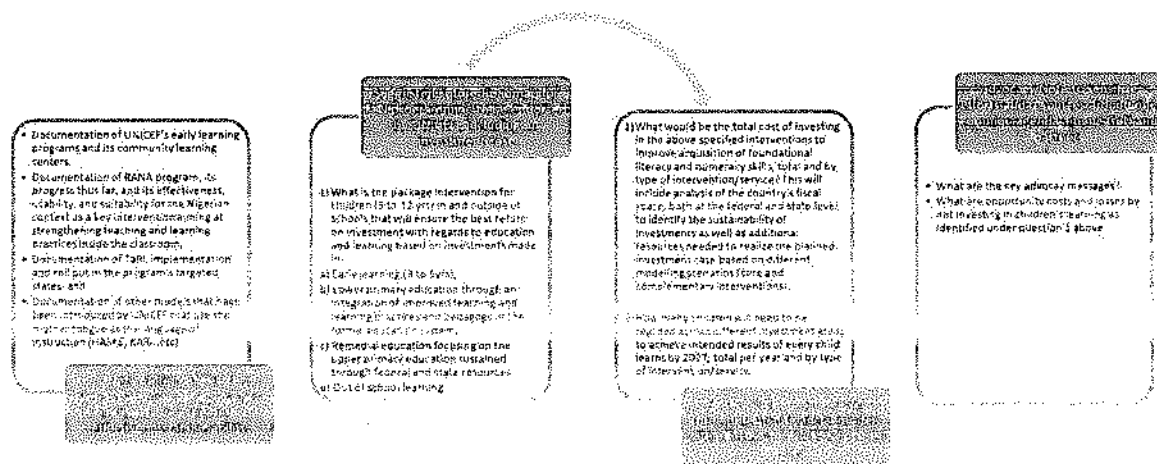
mobilized to support should also be examined and potential inclusion addressed. **A section on variation for states in emergency context should also be included.** Specific segments of the population that should be included in the design of the costed scale up strategy include girls, children with disabilities, traditional institutions representative and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). Consultation with the Ministry of Finance, SMBEP and ALGON is also key to ensure national ownership.

Finally, the strategy will present an **Advocacy Note** with key advocacy messages to be further used in mobilizing actions and resources in support of the learning agenda in Nigeria as well as addressing the root cause of learning and numeracy crisis in the focus states.

**Specific questions to be answered are thus:**

- 1) What is the package intervention for children (3 to 12 yrs) in and outside of schools, in both development and humanitarian contexts, that will ensure the best return on investment with regards to education and learning based on investments made in:
  - a) Early learning (3 to 5 yrs);
  - b) Lower primary education through integration of improved teaching and learning practices and pedagogy in the formal education system (aged 6 to 8);
  - c) Remedial education focusing on the upper primary education sustained through federal and state resources (aged 9 to 12);
  - d) Out of school learning.
- 2) What would be the total cost of investing in the above specified interventions to improve acquisition of foundational literacy and numeracy skills; total and by type of intervention/service? This will include analysis of the country's fiscal space, both at the federal and state level, to identify the sustainability of investments as well as additional resources needed to realize the planned investment case based on different modelling scenarios (core and complementary interventions).
- 3) How many children will need to be reached across different investment areas to achieve intended results of every child learns by 2027; total per year and by type of intervention/service.
- 4) What are opportunity costs and losses by not investing in children's learning as identified under question 1 above? What are the factors do government consider with respect to allocation/spending on schools?

The diagram below can help in visualizing the expected exercises and stages of development under this consultancy as well as key questions to be answered under each of the different exercises and stages.



### 3. SCOPE OF WORK

This strategy will be nation-wide with specific focus on the 11 UNICEF Nigeria's Focused States. Further and as highlighted above, the strategy will focus on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy interventions targeting the below specified age groups and both within schools and out of schools:

- Children 3 to 5 years of age;
- Children 6 to 8 years of age; and
- Children 9 to 12 years of age.

Audience of this strategy will also include the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), State Ministries of Education (SMoE), State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), National Teachers Institute (NTI), National Commission of College Education (NCCE), National Education for Mass Literacy, Adult, and Non-Formal Education, the National Association of Parents/Teachers Association of Nigeria (NAPTAN), development partners, implementing partners of the different FLN interventions, teachers, school support supervisors, school principals, parents, media, private sector, policy makers, lawmakers among others.

### 4. METHDOLOGY

#### Secondary Data Analysis

This work will commence with literature review of all available documents and further analysis of available quantitative secondary data, related to foundational literacy and numeracy skills acquisition and UNICEF's different programs under this programmatic area.

#### Qualitative Research

This will include revision of existing data available at the UBEC and SUBEB's level with regards to UNICEF's FLN interventions as well as qualitative research and data collection through Focus Group Discussions

(FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with UNICEF technical officers, leads from partner implementation agencies, and officials and executives from the FME, UBEC, SoME, SUBEB, teachers, School Support Officers, school principals, parents, among others, to better understand the different FLN models implemented by UNICEF and its partners and assess delivery modality, employed pedagogical approaches, achievements, challenges as well as limitations, if any, in scaling up.

#### Timespan for analysis and projections

The strategy will cover the timespan till 2027, which is the end date of UNICEF new Country Program Document (CPD 2023-2027).

#### Cost Projection Models

While the strategy will build on existing costs to inform the built up of the investment case, standard cost projection models and tools (i.e. such as these endorsed by the Global Partnership for Education) can be used to populate the investment case scenarios results. Expected inflation rates should be also taken into consideration in preparing the costed scale up plan.

#### Validation Workshops

The development of the Strategy will also include a series of validation workshops with key stakeholders at the start, mid-point and conclusion of the work , under each of the different stages, to generate consensus, validate findings and estimation models, and generate the political momentum needed to support the implementation of the scale up strategy.

### 5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

- a) Inception paper/proposal outlining the key steps of how the identification of core interventions, estimation process and submission of deliverables will be undertaken.
- b) A full documentation report of the different FLN models and interventions as implemented by UNICEF Nigeria including a cost-benefit analysis, adaptability, and usability in the Nigerian context.
- c) A costed scale up strategy including impact and costs of investment case across three targeted age groups and based on various scenarios utilized, including a description of the basic/core model, assumptions and limitations, as well as complementary interventions.
- c) A power point presentation of the key results regarding the Cost Scale Up Strategy including assumptions and limitations.
- d) An Advocacy Note to the Government of Nigeria, Private Sector, Media and Development Partners (maximum 10 pages).

Sl. No.	Activities to be completed	Deliverables	Timeline	Payment schedule
1	Inception paper/proposal outlining the key steps of how the identification of core interventions, estimation process and submission of deliverables will be undertaken	Inception report	Two weeks from contract commencement	10%

2	A full documentation report of the different FLN models and interventions as implemented by UNICEF Nigeria including a cost-benefit analysis, adaptability, and usability in the Nigerian context	A full documentation report with supportive visuals, including data sets used in the documentation and transcripts of the FGDs and KIs	One month from contract commencement	25%
3	A costed scale up strategy including impact and costs of investment case across three targeted age groups and based on various scenarios utilized, including a description of the basic/core model, assumptions and limitations, as well as complementary interventions.	The costed scale up strategy including 1) the transcriptions from the validation workshops and 2) the complete data sets analysis upon which the costing model was built	three months from contract commencement	50%
5	An Advocacy Note to the Government of Nigeria, Private Sector, Media and Development Partners (maximum 10 pages)	An advocacy note with key advocacy messages and potential dissemination strategies	four months from contract commencement	15%

6. **OFFICIAL TRAVEL INVOLVED:** Yes- within Abuja and to the Focused States (if permitted by the COVID-19 restrictions).

7. **DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERIENCE**

The recruited firm should have,

- At least 10 years of expertise in quality learning, Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), education planning and financing with a specific focus and previous experience in the West Africa and Nigerian context.
- Previous experience managing similar projects in the West and Central Africa Region.
- Previous work experience with FME and/or UBEC is a plus.
- Resource persons to communicate effectively in both English and regional languages.



**8. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION OF RESULTS**

- Inception report within a week detailing the approach and modality for the execution of the tasks. This would also include the human resources needed at various times.
- Detailed overall work plan for the entire service period and specific monthly workplan specifying the activities to be carried out for the month.
- List of tools, dataset, and reference documents.
- Final Consultancy Reports as identified under the deliverables section

**9. FREQUENCY OF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS: monthly**

**10. UNICEF RECOURSE IN CASE OF UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE**

The deliverables and progress will be evaluated every MONTH by the core team consisting of FME, UBEC and UNICEF representatives. The reported unsatisfactory work will lead to a stoppage of payment for the deliverables and will be blacklisted for further consideration in the contracting process.

**11. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND WEIGHTING CRITERIA**

70% technical + 30% financial = 100% total

A two-stage procedure shall be utilized in assessing the proposals, with assessment of the technical proposal being completed prior to any price proposal being compared. Applications shall therefore contain the following required documentation

**Technical Evaluation Criteria**

• Proposed workplan and timeline.	5
• Alignment of the technical proposal with expected deliverables and objectives	10
• Creativity and strategic approach of the proposal	10
• Prior experience and demonstrated successes in providing similar services	20
• Proposer's organizational capacity, the profile of the team being proposed for the assignment, profiles of the individual team members, and experience of this team in providing similar services	10
• The ability of the proposer to grasp the concepts that will constitute the focus of this project and reflect this within the proposal	10
• Presentation and accuracy of the proposal	5
<b>Total Technical</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Minimum Score 70% X70</b>	<b>49 points</b>

Submitted proposals will be assessed using Cumulative Analysis Method. All request for proposals will be weighed according to the technical (70%) and financial considerations (30%). Financial proposals will be opened only for those application that attained 50% or above on the technical part.

**Financial Proposal: 30 points**

A financial proposal with a breakdown of all costs that are to be charged to UNICEF. This includes the cost of supplies and all other related costs.

**14. Other Clauses: PSEA Language** Consistent with the UN Secretary General's Bulletin related to "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (ST/SGB/2003/13), entities and individuals entering into cooperative agreements with an agency of the United Nations are obligated to "take preventative measures against sexual exploitation or abuse, to investigate allegations thereof, or to take corrective action when sexual exploitation or sexual abuse has occurred."

Failure to do so "shall constitute grounds for termination of any cooperative arrangement with the United Nations." The Contractor is expected to have in place explicit policies related to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries, including commitment to the IASC 6 Core Standards (IASC/2002), and the investigation of such cases. Where the contractor does not have enough capacity for the investigation of such cases, it should request the support of UNICEF. Reasonable suspicion of sexual exploitation or abuse of beneficiaries may be reported by any individual to UNICEF if the complainant so prefers.

**15. CONDITIONS**

- The contractor will work on its own computer(s) and use its own office resources and materials in the execution of this assignment. The contractor's fee shall be inclusive of all office administrative costs
- The contractor's fee should be inclusive of all travel cost.
- Covid 19 related costs should be included in financial proposal
- Please also see UNICEF's Standard Terms and Conditions attached.

**SIGNATURES**

**Developed by:**

Name: Manar Ahmed

Title: Education Manager

Signature: Manar Ahmed

Date: Feb 7th, 2022

**Reviewed by:**

Name: Irene Ayako

Title: Supply Manager

Signature: Irene ayako

Date: 07/02/2022

**Certified by:**

Name: Saadhna Panday- Soobrayan

Title: Chief of Education

Signature: 

Date: 9th Feb. 2022

**Approved by:**

Name: Rushnan Murtaza

Title: Deputy Representative

Signature: 

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

