TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR FINAL EVALUATION OF ALL PUPILS LEARNING FOR ULTIMATE SUCCESS (A-PLUS) – AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN KARAMOJA.

AUGUST 2020
1.0 Background

Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) is an International Development Organization that fights poverty through the lasting power of Volunteering. VSO’s vision is to create lasting change through volunteering. VSO’s high-impact approach involves bringing people together to share skills, build capabilities, promote international understanding and action, and change lives to make the world a fairer place for all. Every year around 1,500 VSO volunteers are working in carefully selected placements, sharing their experience and working to tackle poverty by empowering those really affected by it.

VSO’s thematic areas include Inclusive Education, Maternal Newborn Health and Resilient Livelihoods with programme delivery anchored on the volunteering relational model and in line with the core implementation approaches including social inclusion and gender, Social Accountability and Resilience. In addition, VSO collaborative approach and relational model in programming enables efficient and effective delivery leading not only to broader programme impact but also durable solution to community challenges.

1.1 About the Grant

With funding from Irish Aid through UNICEF Uganda, VSO Uganda has been implementing the All Pupils Learning for Ultimate Success in Life (APLUS) grant in seven districts of Karamoja since July 2017. APLUS project aims to improve education governance; enhancing teachers’ effectiveness to deliver quality teaching and learning processes and strengthening the effectiveness of primary schools to create child friendly learning environment.

1.2 Scope

The project is being implemented in seven districts of Karamoja including: Abim, Kaabong, Karenga, Moroto, Nabilatuk, Napak and Amudat covering 68 government aided primary schools, 10 Coordinating Centres and one Core Primary Teacher Training College.

1.3 Project Target groups:

The project targeted and worked with the following categories of primary actors and stakeholders. These included:
• 34,000 primary school girls and boys.
• 272 teachers (P1-P3).
• 138 Head teachers and Deputy Head teachers.
• 10 Coordinating Centre Tutors (CCTs).
• 14 District Education Officers (DEOs) and Inspectors of Schools (DIS).
• 23 (Core) Primary Teacher College (PTC) staff.
• 272 School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members.
• 13,800 parents and community members.

1.4 Implementation Strategies

Through its volunteer relational model, VSO Uganda identified and placed highly skilled national and international volunteers as key implementers in the field to build capacity through training workshops; mentored and coached teachers from the target schools on CCM. Through a participatory process and to ensure sustainability and ownership on the interventions, the volunteers worked in coordination with CCTs, Moroto Core Teacher Training College and the district/municipal education offices of the 7 districts. Implementation of all activities is anchored on key implementation approaches including social inclusion and gender, Social Accountability and Resilience.

1.5 Implementation Progress

Since 2012, the grant has built the capacity of 14 district officials, 272 Teachers, 136 Head teachers/Deputy head teachers, 585 SMC & PTA members, 13800 community members, and approximately 34,000 school pupils in 68 target schools in the districts of Abim, Karenga, Kaabong, Moroto, Napak, Nabilatuk & Amudat.

Teachers have been trained and mentored on inclusive teaching and learning approaches such as Child Centered Methodologies/Cooperative Learnings. School leaders have been empowered on their roles and responsibilities to provide effective school leadership and over 13,000 parents / guardians have been mobilized through school based engagement meetings and MDD sessions to participate and support school activities.

The grant contributes to UNICEF’s Country Education Program goal of “Improving Access to Quality and Inclusive Education for Karamoja Children. It also links to the SDG 4 “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

A-PLUS envisioned (Theory of Change) that “IF School Leaders, Teachers, Inspectors, CCTs are equipped with effective and inclusive child-centered and child-friendly teaching and learning methodologies and targeted communities are engaged in Education Governance through established functional SMC and active PTA with improved awareness of fundamental issues such as Violence against Children, AND District and Municipal Education Departments are supported to effectively plan, coordinate and monitor with an increased body of evidence of good practices for continuous improvement, THEN there will be accessible, inclusive and relevant quality of education in the seven Karamoja Districts. These interventions are expected to contribute to improvements in pedagogy leading to improved literacy and numeracy achievement levels in the longer term, hence improved learning outcomes for learners in grant supported schools.

It is against this background that, VSO Uganda is seeking to engage the services of a qualified and experienced consultant to conduct final evaluation of the project that will highlight key results, innovative interventions, successes, lessons learned and challenges that will be key reference for future programming in similar field.

2.0 Purpose of the Study

2.1 Overall objective:
To assess the education programme results and document the best practices by providing insight into the project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Focus will be placed on factors that enabled and/or constrained the achievement of the results.

2.2 Specific Objectives of the final evaluation

1. Assess the extent to which teachers’ knowledge, skills and competencies in the application of the Child Centred Methodologies (CCM) in learning processes
2. Assess the extent to which the project improved schools’ planning and management
3. Assess classroom management and learning processes
4. Examine the extent to which the project increased parent and community participation in school planning and development of local instructional materials
5. Explore the contributions of volunteers to the project and the effectiveness of the volunteer relational model

3. Methodology
The evaluation will adopt a qualitative research approach including review of relevant project documents. The methodology will embrace the quality evidence principles (set out in section 7 below) and will place particular emphasis on participatory tools and approaches. The evaluation will be undertaken by an external consultant.

4. Evaluation Questions

4.1 Impact:
- To what extent did the project contribute to improving the learning outcomes for pupils, especially girls in the 7 target districts of Karamoja?

4.2 Effectiveness:
- To what extent did the project contribute to improving the teachers’ knowledge and skills to teach numeracy and literacy in early grade?
- To what extent has the project improved the participation of parents and other community members in school processes?
- To what extent have schools developed and implemented school improvement plans for the past three years?

4.3 Efficiency
- How were the project resources (funds, volunteers, staff and time) utilized to produce the identified outcomes?
- To what extent did the project achieve value for money in utilizing the resources to produce the identified outcomes?
- To what extent did the project use resource in the most economical manner to achieve expected results?

4.4 Sustainability
- Do the stakeholders have the capacity to maintain the achieved outcomes?
- What sustainability mechanisms have been laid down to maintain the identified project outcomes?
- Is the intervention and its impact on children’s learning likely to continue when external support is withdrawn?
4.5 Relevance

• To what extent has the project enabled marginalized children especially girls to access quality education?

4.6 Unintended Outcomes

• What have been the unintended positive outcomes from the project?
• What has been the unintended negative outcomes from the project?

4.7 Volunteering

• How have VSO volunteers contributed to the identified outcomes (intended and unintended)?
• How has VSO’s volunteering interventions and projects contributed to positive and sustainable change in the lives of marginalized and impoverished people?

4.8 Learning & recommendations

• What are the key learnings from the project that inform future similar projects?
• What are the recommendations for VSO for consideration for future education programming?

5. Role of the Consultant

Should include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

a) Develop the inception report
b) Work with the VSO relevant project staff and volunteers to develop the end of project data collection tools (quantitative and qualitative).
c) Pre-test evaluation tools, review and finalize the tools prior to the study in coordination with VSO M&E Manager.
d) Take lead in the data collection processes including but not limited to identifying data collectors, facilitating their training, validating data collection tools and the actual data collection.
e) Conduct a full data analysis including integration of qualitative and quantitative data generated from the literature review and field data collection process.
f) Report writing
g) Dissemination findings to key stakeholders and primary actors in Karamoja and Kampala and incorporate the feedback into the final report
h) Share all data sets and field notes with VSO for review, and further analysis (if required).

5.1 Role of VSO Uganda

a) Provide the project documents including proposal, results framework and reports
b) Provide the consultant with the list of project schools including primary actors and stakeholders to be engaged
c) Avail an introductory letter to the consultant
d) Provide the financial resources

6. Expected Outputs

a) Inception report detailing the methodology including the actual tools to be used for all the proposed respondents, schedule for field data collection, data analysis and reporting, work plan, evaluation tools, list of documentation to reference in the report, outline of final report.
b) A detailed final report of no more than 30 pages in total (2 page executive summary, 20 pages of the main body of the report, 8 pages of Annexes – including photos & quotes from respondents) outlining among others; background characteristics of respondents, and evaluation figures for all the project indicators
c) Evidence of impact that the project contributed towards realizing.
d) Recommendations (4+) based on the results of the evaluation
e) Presentation of evaluation findings (design of PowerPoint of key findings & presentation to VSO) to be shared with key stakeholders during a dissemination workshop and other forums.
f) Final and cleaned raw data, including any pertinent documents generated through the data collection processes. More generally this point encompasses the safe harbor as well as safe return of all documents or property belonging to APLUS as provided or generated throughout the process.
g) Supporting documentation (e.g. geographical maps, sampling framework, generated during fieldwork, etc.) which would normally function as appendices to such a report.
h) Brief trip report recording the process of data collection: what went well, what didn’t work and why, what are some recommendations of human resources and/or other resources required to better support similar subsequent exercises, etc.

7 Quality Evidence Principles

The consultant will be expected to take into account the following quality evidence principles during the evaluation: -

a. Inclusion

- The perspectives of the most excluded and marginalized groups are included in the evidence
- An understanding of the power dynamics – assess power, interest and influence – levels of interest and importance in each context
- Data collectors are well prepared and suited to capture the voices of all the people affected by the intervention
- Primary actors and stakeholders play an active role in the assessment process
- The findings are disaggregated according to sex, disability and other relevant social differences
- Data collected is interpreted through on-going dialogue with primary actors/stakeholders

b. Contribution

- Data is available to show that change has happened
- The explanation of how the intervention contributes to change is explored
- Alternative factors (e.g. the contribution of other actors) are explored to explain the observed result alongside an intervention’s contribution
- Unintended and unexpected changes (positive or negative) are identified and explained
- Evidence presented should:
  - Help VSO learn from failure
  - Identify the limits of the research
  - Clearly demonstrate what and how we have contributed to change
  - Illustrate how different approaches to volunteering adds value to change
Illustrate how continuous analysis (assumptions, contributions, context) was built into the project

c. Methodologies

- Ensure that approaches and designs are ethical and reasonable
- Build in continuous and on-going analysis into the methodology
- Ensure the methods are appropriate and relevant for the purpose
- Test and peer review proposed methodological approaches
- Document and ensure an ethical approach to evidence collection, analysis and use
- Conflicting findings and divergent perspectives are presented and explained in the analysis and conclusions

d. Transparency

- Commit to report both negatives and positives, intended and unintended outcomes
- Always ask consent, respect confidentiality and decisions
- Commit to always being clear to participants on how and where data will be used
- State clearly the levels of independence of research/evaluation
- Commit wherever possible to compare our data with other data sources
- Findings and conclusions of the assessment are shared with, and validated by, a range of key stakeholders (e.g. beneficiaries, partners, peers)
- Commit to define complex words as interpreted by respondents given that the understanding of language will vary based on use and localized definitions

8. Time frame for the Evaluation

The evaluation study is planned to commence on 19th October, 2020 and conclude no later than 18th November, 2020. The estimated level of effort for this assignment is 30 days, split according to the following tasks:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of project documents</td>
<td>2 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fieldwork (Quantitative &amp; Qualitative) including travel to and from the 7 districts of Karamoja</td>
<td>15 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report writing (draft &amp; finalization) &amp; presentation</td>
<td>10 days</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of final report</td>
<td>19th November, 2020</td>
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9. Essential requirements for consultants wishing to tender for this evaluation

a) A minimum qualification of a Master’s Degree in Humanities, Social Sciences, Education and other relevant fields

b) Experience with implementing various evaluation design methodologies, especially in the education sector

c) Previous demonstrated experience of conducting similar or related studies as the lead consultant

d) Experience of facilitating and analyzing qualitative feedback from Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews and Participatory Methodologies particularly child participatory methodologies and process tracing

e) Strong quantitative data collection and analysis skills and experience

f) Experience working in Karamoja region will be of added advantage (Working knowledge of the local language would be an advantage, and essential for field work interviews with local community members)

The Consultant/Firm reports to: VSO M&E Manager, with regular consultation with the Education Programme Manager and Programme Coordinator.

Payment

Full payment will be contingent on receipt of all deliverables. A payment of 60% of the contract value shall be made on approval of the inception report. The final payment (40%) of the contract value will be made on acceptance of the final. Include the CVs of the team that will be involved in undertaking this task. The proposed amount of shillings for this task should include tax provisions.

Application Procedure.

Applicants must submit the following documentation before 5th October 2020, 3pm East African Time. **No late submissions will be accepted:**

1. Technical and financial proposal demonstrating understanding of the terms of reference
2. Curriculum vitae of proposed team members (no more than 10 pages) detailing only relevant experience

3. A one-page cover letter detailing at a high-level how you meet the requirements for this assignment (outlined above); The proposed methodologies, sampling frameworks, work-plans and draft tools to be used; Clear costing of planned activities including all applicable taxes and fees (in UGX).

Please send all applications through our online link: procurement.uganda@vsoint.org and /or https://www.vsointernational.org/about/careers/endpoint-evaluation-consultant-a0m3z00000dygvcaah

The successful consultant/firm will be notified within one week after the deadline and will be invited for interviews and hence will need to provide references with the application.

Job location

The consultant will need to be able to travel to Karamoja region where the project operates, as well as to VSO’s office in Kampala. Report write-up may be done remotely, but an in-person presentation of findings will be strongly preferred.