



Terms of Reference for the Evaluation and Strategic Plan Development Exercise of SEND Sierra Leone (2024-2029)

Background

The Social Enterprise Development, SEND-Sierra Leone, stands as a registered national non-governmental organization with a mission to foster good governance, accountability, and equality for both women and men. As of mid-2023, SSL has been operational in 15 of the 16 political and administrative districts and numerous chiefdoms and communities across Sierra Leone.

Over the past four years, SEND-Sierra Leone has contributed to Sierra Leone's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) achievement, employing two comprehensive programs. Firstly, SEND-Sierra Leone prioritized enhancing the organizational capabilities of youth and women-led grassroots networks, empowering them to advocate for inclusive political and administrative institutions that uphold their rights to development and governance participation at all levels – chiefdom, district, and national.

The governance program also focused on equipping vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWD), with essential skills and platforms to hold the government accountable in planning and delivering vital public social infrastructure and services such as water, hygiene, sanitation, education, and healthcare.

Additionally, SEND-Sierra Leone's second program aimed at empowering women, farmers, and other marginalized groups to attain livelihood, food, and nutrition security. It involved implementing various strategies, including micro-financing through village savings and loan associations and credit union development, providing small business development training, supporting food production while educating women and young children about nutrition, and promoting the adoption of climate change mitigation agricultural practices.

Through these initiatives, SEND-Sierra Leone strives to create lasting positive impacts in Sierra Leone, fostering a brighter, more equitable future for all its citizens.

The Strategic Plan for the period 2019 to 2023 has been guided by five key directions, closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- **Strategic Direction 1:** Promoting livelihood security in rural communities, contributing to SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 2 (Zero hunger), and SDG 10 (Decent work and economic growth).
- **Strategic Direction 2:** Strengthening access to quality education for girls and marginalized groups in rural communities in support of SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 5 (Gender equality).

- **Strategic Direction 3:** Improving health facilities and services in difficult-to-reach and rural communities, fulfilling SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) and SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation).
- **Strategic Direction 4:** Promoting women's political empowerment to realize SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 10 (Reduced inequality), and SDG 16 (Peace, justice, and strong institutions).
- **Strategic Direction 5:** Establishing a regional program in collaboration with other affiliates of SEND West Africa.

The governance of SEND-Sierra Leone is overseen by a 7-member Board of Directors, responsible for policy-making and providing administrative direction. The Senior Management Team implements programs led by the Country Director in collaboration with various target groups, stakeholders, and donor partners. Key implementing partners include district councils, civil society organizations, chiefdom and traditional authorities, media, and community groups, focusing on women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWD).

The current strategic plan's programs have been funded by over 16 donor partners, including prominent organizations such as the Irish Embassy in Sierra Leone, Christian Aid, Trocaire, Welthungerhilfe, Engineers Without Borders- Denmark, UNDP, EU, Care International Sierra Leone, UNWomen, Trust Africa, Solidaridad West Africa, TERRA TECH Förderprojekte e.V. and BMZ of Germany.

Through these concerted efforts, SEND-Sierra Leone aims to substantially impact the lives of those in rural communities, furthering progress towards the SDGs and creating positive change in Sierra Leone.

Objectives of the assignment

This assignment aims to evaluate the outcomes and impact of SEND's performance over the past four years in collaboration with individual donor partners. Internal reviews and project evaluation exercises have already confirmed significant results. Therefore, this assessment focuses on the development outcomes achieved in delivering the Strategic Plan 2019 to 2023, which will serve as a foundation for preparing the Strategic Plan 2024 to 2029. The assignment comprises several objectives:

- Conduct an assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2019 to 2023, highlighting and describing the critical developmental changes, outcomes, and impacts realized in the lives of the beneficiaries under each strategic direction outlined below.
- Undertake an organizational assessment to identify SEND's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Develop a comprehensive strategic plan covering 2024 to 2029, including establishing milestones to guide the organization's future endeavors.

Through this assessment and planning process, SEND aims to build upon its accomplishments, address shortcomings, and strategize for more significant impact and positive changes in the lives of its beneficiaries and communities in the coming years.

Scope of assignment

The consultant will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of all programs and projects implemented under the previous Strategic Plan, including project proposals, implementation reports, monitoring data, end-of-project evaluations, and internal review meeting reports.

2. Review relevant national development policies and program documents during the life of the Strategic Plan, including government plans and program reports related to gender, health, education, water, climate and sanitation aimed at achieving the SDGs. Additionally, examine country reports by UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank, FAO, and international NGOs operating in Sierra Leone.
3. Assess the policy environment for civil sector involvement in promoting good governance, women's economic empowerment, political participation, and increasing livelihood and food security for underserved communities. Identify policy enablers to support the Strategic Plan 2024 to 2029 and challenges that must be addressed.
4. Collect and analyze primary data from target groups and implementing stakeholders under each Strategic Direction. This includes women's network members, youth groups and leaders, village savings and loan associations, GMFs, credit union boards and members, political party leaders, and beneficiaries of infrastructural health, education, sanitation, hygiene, nutrition projects, and climate change mitigation activities.
5. Collect and analyze data from key implementing stakeholders, especially local district councils and departments, such as district health management committees, civil society consortium partners, traditional authorities, leaders of youth groups, and members of community health insurance schemes.
6. Review the effectiveness and relevance of organizational systems and procedures, including human resources, management, communication, monitoring, and evaluation. Assess key policy documents related to HR, M&E, communication, and board and Senior Management Team (SMT) meeting minutes, followed by interviews with their members.
7. Evaluate the strategies and effectiveness of SEND-Sierra Leone's promotion of women in development and governance and its climate change mitigation mainstreaming approach.

The consultant must carry out these tasks diligently to provide valuable insights to inform the organization's future planning and impact.

Methodology for undertaking the assignment.

This assignment's consultant must employ a participatory, intersectionality, and gender-sensitive evaluation framework. This approach should combine quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to ensure the findings and recommendations that inform the strategic plan are well-founded and robust.

The adoption of an Intersectionality approach in this context entails considering the complex interplay of various factors, such as gender, demographics, religion, economic status, education, women's network membership, location (rural and urban), and political party affiliation, which influenced beneficiaries' participation and ultimately shaped how the Strategic Plan impacted their lives.

To commence the assignment, the consultant will design an evaluation framework, which will undergo review and approval by SEND-Sierra Leone management. This design should encompass an evaluation planning workshop, data collection tools, guidelines, protocols, and a validation workshop for key findings and recommendations. Additionally, the consultant will specify the digital software intended for quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.

Deliverables for this assignment

The assignment will yield:

1. An Outcomes and Impact Report of the Strategic Plan (SP) 2019 to 2023, which will be 25 to 30 pages long and will include:
 2. i) A summary of the methodology and tools used. ii) Assessing Sierra Leone's progress towards achieving the SDGs prioritized by SEND-Sierra Leone. iii) Analysis of the

- development outcomes achieved for each strategic direction, supported by quantitative and qualitative data. iv) Identification of key strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. v) Key recommendations for the Strategic Plan 2024 to 2029, including revisions to previous strategic directions and strategies for youth and climate change mainstreaming.
3. A Strategic Plan for the period 2024 to 2029, containing:
 4. i) A national situational analysis and status update on progress and achievements related to the SDGs. ii) An assessment of the policy environment governing the operation of the national civil society sector. iii) An evaluation of SEND-Sierra Leone, including a SWOT analysis. iv) New strategic directions with critical outputs and outcomes. v) A Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) plan and budget.

Mainstreaming Gender, Safeguarding Program Participants-Children & Adults

Consultants engaged with SEND are expected to strictly uphold the organization's core values and principles: Integrity, Service, and Accountability. In line with these values, SEND enforces several policies, including Beneficiary and Staff Protection from Exploitation and Abuse, Child Safeguarding, Anti-Workplace Harassment, Code of Conduct, and Complaint & Response Mechanism (CRM).

Throughout their interactions with stakeholders and staff, consultants must remain conscious of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) sensitivities, ensuring that all activities align with these necessary considerations. By adhering to these guidelines, consultants play a vital role in promoting a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment within the organization and its projects.

Commitment to Quality Work

The consultant will follow an evidence-based approach and maintain the highest work standards to meet the agreed-upon timelines for each assignment stage. Throughout the process, clear objectives and transparent consultation procedures will be prioritized. The consultant will diligently verify all facts and figures cited in the strategic plan to ensure accuracy. Additionally, special attention will be given to the content and format of the draft plan to ensure it meets the highest standards expected for such documents. This will involve thorough editing and ensuring the information is clear and concise.

Qualifications/Competencies/ Experience

SEND-Sierra Leone is seeking the services of a qualified professional or consultancy firm with the following qualifications and skills:

1. Demonstrated experience in strategic planning and development, preferably in the context of non-governmental organizations or similar entities.
2. Strong analytical capabilities to gather, analyze, and interpret data, identifying trends, challenges, and opportunities related to education, women's empowerment, livelihood and agriculture, gender, and climate issues in Sierra Leone.
3. Excellent organizational skills with the ability to prioritize tasks and work effectively with minimal supervision. Practical communication skills to ensure clear and concise information sharing throughout the strategic planning process.
4. In-depth understanding of the broader social, economic, and political environment influencing the relevant sectors in Sierra Leone. Familiarity with the specific challenges and dynamics of the local context will be advantageous.
5. Proficiency in employing participatory methodologies and approaches to management and operations, including involving stakeholders and fostering inclusive decision-making processes.
6. Evidence of intersectionality research and evaluation experience and skills will be highly valued.

SEND-SL seeks a professional or consultancy firm that can bring these qualifications and skills to the table, playing a vital role in the successful development of a comprehensive and impactful ten-year strategic plan

Duration

The consultancy shall be for up to two months, beginning on October 2023.

Remuneration and Method of Payment

- The remuneration and method of payment will be negotiated
- The consultancy costs for travel and meetings should not exceed USD 1500
- The Consultant shall receive 20% of the final cost after delivery and acceptance of the work plan, 40% of the final cost after the delivery and acceptance of a satisfactory report based on the terms of reference, and 40% of the final cost after meeting all deliverable outputs
- The payment shall be by cheque or bank transfer

Penalty

- The consultant is subject to a 15% reduction of the total agreed once
- The report is submitted two weeks after the agreed timelines (without a just and reasonable mutually agreed explanation). Non-delivery of the tasks shall lead to withholding the final payment (40%) until receipt and approval of all deliverables.

Application materials

Interested parties should submit a concise proposal for how the work will be carried out. Interested applicants are encouraged to submit their bids alongside detailed proposals, indicating their work schedule from the commencement to the end of the consultancy. Included should be:

- Technical approach and suggested timeline (maximum 5 pages)
- Case studies of previous experience in strategic development planning (maximum 2 pages)
- Budget for work to be undertaken (submitted in a single Excel worksheet and broken down into personnel, fees, travel and others)

Application timeline

Proposals should be submitted to: recruitment@sendsierraleone.com with the subject line 'SEND-SL Strategic Planning Consultancy'.

Application deadline:

- Friday 1st September 2023
- Short-listed applicants may be invited to attend a video conference interview.