



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY

The FEED: Empowering Communities through Sustainable School Feeding in Kenema, Kailahun and Bo

Social Enterprise Development (SEND) Sierra Leone is seeking a consultant(s) to conduct a feasibility study for a proposed intervention titled '*The FEED: Empowering Communities through Sustainable School Feeding in Kenema, Kailahun and Bo*'. The intervention will be financed jointly by SEND-SL, the TERRA TECH Förderprojekte e.V. & the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) (75%). The project has a total budget of 955,295€ for 36 months and will be implemented by SEND-SL. It is preferred that the applicant(s) has demonstrated working experience in Sierra Leone, particularly in social sciences, livelihood, nutrition and basic sciences.

1. About SEND-SL

SEND-SL is a non-governmental organization dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals across Sierra Leone while upholding the principles of human rights and gender equality. SEND-SL focuses on several thematic areas, encompassing Health, Infrastructure, Nutrition, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), Solar Energy, Education (both infrastructural development and capacity building), Governance (with a focus on women's political and economic empowerment), Livelihood, and Climate Change. The organization excels in various competencies, including promoting women's leadership, gender transformation, self-reliance approaches, governance, community resource mobilization, and the facilitation of community-led initiatives.

2. About the Intervention

2.1 Background

Sierra Leone is highly food and nutrition insecure, worsened by COVID-19 and the global fuel crisis, resulting in high inflation and food costs. Over half of the population lives below the poverty line of US\$1.90 per day. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Sierra Leone's economy, with projections of 2.3 to 4.0% contraction in 2020. School feeding has been an important safety net in Sierra Leone. The government launched its first National School Feeding Policy in 2021 to promote children's holistic development and local food production.

The proposed action aims to establish a home-grown food-feeding initiative to support the school feeding program and generate income for schools in three districts: Kenema, Bo, and Kailahun. Eight schools in these districts need more access to quality food and agricultural infrastructure, hindering agricultural productivity. The initiative targets over 9,500 pupils, 96 teachers, 30 MDAs, 3 District

Councils, 10 CSOs, and two media outlets. Indirectly, the program will benefit over 1.7 million individuals in the three project districts.

Kenema, Kailahun, and Bo districts face significant challenges regarding food security and malnutrition rates among school-aged children. To address these issues, there is a need to establish homegrown feeding initiatives within the boarding schools in the district. Such initiatives would provide nutritious meals to the pupils and fortify the local economy by sourcing food from local farmers and suppliers.

To achieve this, the following objectives will be implemented:

Overall Objective: The project's primary goal is to improve the food and nutrition supply of pupils by establishing homegrown feeding initiatives within boarding schools in Bo, Kenema and Kailahun districts.

Specific Objectives/Outputs:

- Establish sustainable and locally-driven feeding programs within boarding schools.
- Enhance the nutritional value of meals provided to pupils by incorporating locally sourced and diverse food options.
- Strengthen the collaboration between schools, local farmers, and suppliers to ensure the sustainability of the feeding initiatives.
- Promote community engagement and participation in the project to foster a sense of ownership and empower local communities.

The project is expected to provide seeds for various institutions to complement school feeding programs. Support female out-growers in nearby communities with loan schemes to reduce food insecurity and support the school. Support 450 female household heads in 60 communities with seed funds in the first year of implementation. Develop simple loan agreements for direct project beneficiaries. Conclude seed bank contracts with villages to determine distribution and reimbursement over a period with "interest".

3. Objectives of the feasibility study and use

The feasibility study aims to provide SEND-SL and all stakeholders with a sound basis for developing the full project proposal by clarifying prerequisites, assumptions, opportunities, and risks. The study findings should provide an overview of key areas in consideration of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability (DAC OECD) scopes of the proposed intervention. The study will also be submitted to the TERRA TECH/BMZ for assessment of the overall feasibility of the project. The feasibility study will also outline the changes possible for the next 3 years with project support. It will critically examine the situation of the Kailahun, Kenema and Bo districts and the project outcomes and outputs formulated to reach the desired result. It will also help analyze target stakeholders identified as MDAs, mini-grid suppliers and operators, local authorities, etc.

The final report will include findings and recommendations for possible strategies and activities with a clear qualitative and quantitative description of each indicator and develop tools for monitoring, data collection, and an operational M&E plan.

The study is expected to:

1. Select agricultural products for an increase in production, improved farming techniques, processing, value-added opportunities identified, value-added chains set up, and marketing promoted
2. Carry out a market study to identify possible value-added chains and determine the product's market potential
3. Engage institutions to develop business and sustainability plans. Train institutions in processing, value creation, marketing, and business management to improve nutrition security and alternative income generation sources.
4. Identify interventions prioritized by critical stakeholders within the study areas and their broader interest and support for the proposed project.
5. Make recommendations to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the project.
6. Identifying potential barriers and risks that could impact the results proposed.
7. Identify mechanisms and methodologies to ensure the sustainability of the project.

4. Methodology

It is to be ensured that the methodology is participatory, Livelihood and Nutrition-base, and considers the cultural & social settings in Sierra Leone in line with Core Humanitarian Standards, SEND-SL core values, ethics, safeguarding principles and Code of Conduct. The consultant will be responsible for designing the study, including its methodology preferred/possible qualitative and quantitative tools and research methods that could be proposed.

Methods of study will comprise the following (but not limited to):

- a) Desk review of relevant documents, including project documents/data/reports, strategies, and approaches of SEND-SL, documents/manuals from similar interventions by other donor organizations, government notices/policies/documents impacting implementation, etc. The consultant is expected to share primary documents studied with the contracting party.
- b) Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews (semi-structured) with SEND staff, MDAs, district and chiefdom stakeholders, women groups, CSOs, Mini-grid operators, Credit Unions/FSAs, community members, and other key stakeholders necessary for successful intervention implementation. The consultant must finalize selection criteria and sample size of interviewees in consultation with the implementation teams. The consultant is expected to prepare the interview guides in consultation with the implementation teams.
- c) Direct observation during field visits.

5. Scope of Work

The consultant needs to conduct a:

- a) Gathering data on malnutrition rates, dietary patterns, and existing feeding programs in boarding schools.

- b) Drafting the project impact matrix according to BMZ guidelines and finalizing with TERRA TECH/BMZ.
- c) Facilitate a one-day workshop to discuss the recommendations and theory of change.
- d) Provide an analytical framework to address the purpose and objectives of the feasibility study.

6. 4. Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected from the consultant(s):

- a) Inception report max 5 pages, with the proposed methodology, analytical framework and timelines. Data collection tools should be attached as appendices to the inception report.
- b) Debriefing presentation at the end of the field visits to outline the most important findings of the study
- c) First draft of the feasibility report as per the format in Annex I, at the latest two weeks after completing the field visits, at most 30 pages. The report should have concise recommendations.
- d) The impact matrix
- e) Documents/photos/data studied/collected during the research study.
- f) Final report with all primary data collected.

7. Timeline

At most, the total planned days of consultant engagement are 21 workdays. The days are calculated in the following manner:

| No | Task | Days |
|-------------------|--|-----------|
| 1 | Inception meeting | 1 |
| 2 | Inception report, development of data collection tools and review of documents | 3 |
| 3 | Fieldwork | 5 |
| 4 | Analysis of firsthand data, preparation of debrief presentation, delivery of presentation, finalization of presentation incorporating comments | 6 |
| 5 | Writing of draft report | 3 |
| 6 | Workshop on recommendations and impact matrix | 1 |
| 7 | Writing of final report after comments | 4 |
| Total Days | | 23 |

Submission timelines:

| Event | Milestones* |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Advertisement | 09.10.2023 |
| Application Deadline | 23.10.2023 |
| Selection of Consultant | 30.10.2023 |
| Inception Meeting | 5.11.2023 |
| Inception Report | 8.11.2023 |
| Field Investigation Phase | TBA |
| Debrief Note/presentation | 21.11.2023 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Draft Report incl. impact matrix and recommendations | 26.11.2023 |
| Final Feasibility Report | 30.11.2023 |

*Milestones are only indicative dates for the completion of tasks. During the inception meeting, the consultants and the contracting party will agree on the exact timeline.

8. Qualifications of the Consultant

- a) At least 5 years of experience working on and evaluating development projects, including livelihood, gender, women empowerment, primary and social sciences and school feeding, with a postgraduate qualification in the same fields. Experience with ex-ante studies is strongly desired. Experience working on and evaluating Livelihood, Nutrition and WASH projects is an asset. Also, relevant experience and expertise in the field of sustainable school feeding initiatives
- b) Strong knowledge/demonstrated experience of Sierra Leone country contexts is a must.
- c) Knowledge of the context of Sierra Leone, especially related to gender transformative and women empowerment approaches, is an asset.
- d) Proficiency in using MS Office is a must. Experience working with any data representation software is an asset.
- e) Clear, practical writing skills in English and local language skills are desirable.

9. Application Procedure

Applicants must provide a technical and financial offer:

1. The **technical part** (70% wt.) It should include a description of the overall design and methodology of the study and a work plan/adaptation to the timeline at hand (maximum 5 pages).
2. The **financial part** (30% wt.) includes a proposed budget for the complete study. It should state the fees per working day (plus the respective VAT and withholding tax, if applicable), the number of working days proposed and other costs such as travel. The cost of any training, including logistics, stationery, transport, etc., must also be included in the budget.
3. CV with 3 references, and one should be from the recent organization you have worked with.
4. The consultant should provide evidence of previous work or reports on 2 commissioned assignments of a similar nature.

10. Payment Milestones

The consultant will receive payment from SEND-SL in three instalments:

- a) First payment: 40 % upon acceptance of inception report and data collection tools
- b) Second payment: 30 % upon the submission of the draft report,
- c) Final payment: 30% subject to acceptance of the final report by SEND-SL
- d) National tax laws will be applied to all payments.

SEND-SL will only settle payment if the consultant has accomplished all the tasks on time and deliverables are approved by the SEND-SL Country Director and Human Resource Manager/Program Officer.

11. Confidentiality

All documents and data acquired from documents and during interviews and meetings are confidential and to be used solely for the evaluation. Consultants will be expected to sign a data protection agreement (DPA). A consent form should be issued to all respondents participating in this survey. Consultants will undergo credibility screening, including money laundering, fraud, etc.

The deliverables and all material linked to the evaluation (produced by the evaluator(s) or the organization itself) are confidential and always remain the property of SEND-SL.

12. Submission of bids:

Applications should be submitted to the email address recruitment@sendsierraleone.com with the subject title: Feasibility study for WAREED Proposal development.

Women with the required expertise are strongly encouraged to apply

Closing date: 10th November 2023