

ANNEX B

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SIG VERIFICATION AND RAPID ASSESSMENTS

Summary

Title	Consultancy services for supporting Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) on School Improvement Grant (SIG) verifications and rapid assessments.
Purpose	Support MoPSE undertake SIG verification assessments in randomly selected schools and rapid assessments
Type of Contract	Institutional
Location	All the 10 Provinces of Zimbabwe
Duration	12 months
Reporting to	Education Specialist

Background

The School Improvement Grant (SIG), introduced in 2013, was designed to address the chronic underfunding of schools, particularly those in rural or impoverished communities. These schools often lack sufficient financial resources, hindering efforts to provide equitable access to quality education. SIG was developed as a direct cash disbursement mechanism to ensure that resources reached the neediest schools. Its success has led to adopting its approach in other initiatives, including Complementary school infrastructures, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) programs, Emergency Education responses, and school feeding schemes.

SIG funds are disbursed annually and, in some cases, termly, directly to the school's bank USD accounts (the frequency depends on the type of SIG). The Education Management Information System (EMIS) is a critical tool for identifying eligible schools. The selection process is guided by the selection criteria developed and reviewed annually by the Education Coordination Group (ECG), which is chaired by the Minister of Education and comprises representatives from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) at all administrative levels, UN agencies, major donors, and civil society organizations. This collaborative framework ensures transparency and alignment with the sector's priorities. Equity considerations are central to SIG's implementation. The selection criteria are evidence-based and prioritize the most disadvantaged schools, focusing on those in areas with low-income levels and limited access to resources. The annual review of the criteria ensures that the intervention remains responsive to changing needs and challenges, enabling it to address disparities in education access effectively and sustainably.

SIG has become a cornerstone and flagship of efforts to promote equitable educational opportunities in Zimbabwe and to empower schools.

Below are the different types of school improvement Grants.

The Regular School Improvement Grant (SIG), implemented by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), provides targeted financial support to under-resourced schools, focusing on non-personnel and non-capital needs. The program promotes a "whole school approach," engaging school authorities, communities, and students in identifying challenges and collaboratively developing a School Development Plan (SDP) to prioritize and address key issues. Disbursed through UNICEF, the grants aim to improve access, quality, governance, and resource adequacy. Key priorities include supporting marginalized students, enhancing teaching quality, providing learning materials, improving school facilities, and strengthening resource management. SIG supports sustainable school development by addressing financial constraints and promoting participatory planning. Annually, SIG grants cover non-salary, non-personnel needs.

SIG Complementary: The Complementary Fund SIG modality, supported by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), prioritizes infrastructure development, focusing on completing classrooms and science laboratories. This funding ensures the continuation and completion of critical construction and rehabilitation projects already underway. The initiative enhances learning environments by addressing unfinished structures, particularly in resource-constrained schools, fostering improved access to quality education and science learning opportunities.

SIG WASH: The SIG WASH program aims to provide schools without access to safe drinking water with the necessary resources to improve their water supply systems. This initiative was introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the broader effort to prepare schools for reopening while ensuring students' and teachers' health and safety. Still, it has evolved to support schools without safe water to improve children's overall health. The program specifically focuses on rehabilitating existing water sources, ensuring that schools have reliable access to clean, safe drinking water, which is crucial for preventing waterborne diseases and promoting hygiene.

SIG School Feeding: The SIG school feeding aims at supporting schools without access to funds to buy food to feed learners at school. This was introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure that the learners have nutritious food. The SIG school feeding makes food available, so learners are not hungry in class.

SIG Emergency: The Emergency School Improvement Grants (SIG) program, implemented by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), provides targeted support to schools impacted by natural disasters, including cyclones. This program focuses on repairing damaged infrastructure, such as classrooms and facilities, ensuring schools can resume operations promptly. Additionally, the grants address critical needs by supplying teaching and learning

materials, helping restore normalcy in the education system for affected communities, and supporting learners' recovery.

In annex there is a sample of utilization criteria for some of the SIGs

Justification

Resources provided directly to schools must be closely monitored to ensure they are used for the intended purpose. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), UNICEF, and donors conduct audit, joint school monitoring visits whereby among others the use of SIG is also monitored. The Ministry also conducts school monitoring through their Grants Management Team (GMT) to check and provide reasonable assurance that the schools financial statements are accurate, complete, and comply with relevant accounting standards.

As MoPSE and partners do these processes, there is also a need for a robust monitoring and verification exercise utilizing rigorous methodologies to ensure the reliability and credibility of the results, hence the need for independent verification by a third party to mitigate bias and build confidence in the utilization of SIG.

This need for the verification exercise arises from several challenges and risks inherent in allocating funds directly to schools, especially in diverse and often remote settings. Key challenges include ensuring that funds are used strictly according to the stringent criteria set out in the School Development Plans (SDP), mitigating the risks of misallocation, misappropriation, or mismanagement of funds, and maintaining a high standard of transparency and accountability. The necessity for an independent verification mechanism is underscored by the potential for conflicts of interest and the introduction of bias when monitoring and assessments are conducted internally. An independent framework ensures unbiased evaluation and strengthens the integrity of the verification process. This impartiality is vital for building trust among stakeholders, including government bodies, funding partners, and the community, ensuring that the funds reach the intended recipients and are used as effectively as possible to enhance educational outcomes. Complementing these efforts, an independent entity, such as an accounting firm, will be contracted to conduct unbiased verifications of SIG management at the school level.

Objectives

The primary objective of the SIG independent verification and rapid needs assessment is to identify deviations from established financial management procedures and instances of fund misuse or misappropriation at the school or district levels. By doing so, the framework ensures accountability and supports the implementation of timely corrective actions, which may include disciplinary measures, legal proceedings, or restitution. These measures are crucial for safeguarding resources and reinforcing trust among stakeholders, ensuring the continuity and integrity of the program. Specifically, the objectives include:

- Ensuring Compliance: Verify that the disbursement and expenditure of SIG funds align with governmental and donor policies and procedures.

- Transparency and Accountability: Provide transparent reporting and accountability to stakeholders to build confidence in the management of SIG funds.
- Mitigation of Risks: Identify and mitigate financial mismanagement, fraud, and corruption risks.
- Capacity Building: Identify areas of weakness in financial management at the school level and provide targeted capacity-building initiatives to address these gaps.
- Strengthening Program Integrity: Ensure that all financial transactions and administrative actions are documented and open to scrutiny, thereby enhancing the integrity of the education funding framework.

Scope of the assignment

This independent verification will provide an accurate compliance assessment by targeting a sample of schools receiving SIG funds nationwide. This comprehensive monitoring and verification process ensures fiscal discipline, enhances the impact of SIG funds, and contributes to the program's sustainability by proactively addressing challenges and upholding rigorous accountability standards.

Specific Tasks

The independent firm will verify 10% of the schools that received all types of SIG payments throughout the country for 2024 and 2025. In addition, 50 randomly selected schools will undergo rapid assessments. This applies to all the types of SIG that would have been disbursed in 2025 and 2024 SIG Complementary. MoPSE and UNICEF will jointly carry out the random selection of target schools per province and share the schools with the independent firm.

Depending on the situation, the verification and rapid assessment process will adopt both in situ verification (physical visits) and remote data collection. Therefore, the independent firm must outline its approaches for remote verification and physical visits, including the fees involved. The independent firm should provide two options:

a) Conduct Verification for all types of SIG, including Regular SIG, SIG Complementary and SIG WASH at a ratio of 10% of beneficiary schools for each type of SIG.

1. Independently verify disbursements and expenditure of the school grants to at least 10% randomly selected beneficiary schools per each type of SIG.
2. Independently verify the use of school grants disbursed to the schools, including physical verification of the goods and services procured. The following will be the key categories of questions to be asked (to be refined with the selected firm):
 - General Information of the school
 - SIG Implementation processes
 - Financial Information
 - Verification Information
 - School Infrastructure and Monitoring Inquiry

- Sources of Funding
 - IN SITU verification of financial records and use of funds
 - Expenditure procedures
3. Ensure, through *in situ* verification/remote data collection of financial records and use of funds, that:
 - Government of Zimbabwe 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.
 - Sampled receipts (at least three 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 is expected to ensure accurate data presentation using graphs and explanation of causality of the analysis.
 7. The agency is expected to include more references to the previous findings and some comparison of the findings of the two reports.
 8. The agency will be expected to build capacity on weaknesses identified at the school verified.

b) Conduct Rapid assessments of Regular SIG, SIG Complementary and SIG WASH Funding 50 schools randomly selected.

1. Conduct rapid assessments to verify disbursements and implementation progress to at least 50 randomly selected from the beneficiary schools for Regular SIG, SIG Complementary and SIG WASH funding.
2. Assess the market situation and establish the challenges schools encounter in procuring and accessing funds from the banks.
3. Assess utilization 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:
 - Government of Zimbabwe 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.
- Sampled receipts and expenditures are supported by appropriate documentation as required.

Methodology for SIG Verification

The independent firm will receive a consolidated tool containing general questions for all types of SIG and specific questions for each type.

The independent firm will undertake the following tasks:

1. **Work Plan & Scheduling:** Develop and submit a work plan to MoPSE and UNICEF for field visit or remote data collection schedules.
2. **Review Verification Tools:** Assess and refine the SIG verification tool with MoPSE and UNICEF, creating a consolidated tool for the selected SIG assessments.
3. **Team Induction:** Conduct an induction for field teams on SIG assessment and verification with MoPSE and UNICEF support.
4. **Team Deployment:** Collaborate with MoPSE and UNICEF to deploy teams to schools, with District Schools Inspectors (DSIs) participating in the verification and assessment.
5. **Internal Control Review:** Evaluate schools' internal control systems, including fund management and segregation of duties, through interviews and SDPs.
6. **FACE Form Compliance:** Assess whether FACE forms were submitted timely and whether expenditure reports matched the planned activities in the SDP.
7. **Progress Review:** Analyze whether schools followed the SDP, investigating any deviations and their causes.
8. **Purchasing Power Assessment:** Evaluate the purchasing power of schools and issues related to Nostro accounts, including transactions with non-Nostro service providers and procurement in both ZIG and USD.
9. **Expenditure Review:** Examine at least three invoices to verify proper documentation, expenditure legitimacy, and compliance with financial guidelines.
10. **Procurement Review:** Assess transparency and competitiveness in procurement, ensuring adherence to financial management guidelines and SDPs.
11. **Output Assessment:** Evaluate the achievement of expected results based on reports, inspections, and evidence.
12. **Capacity Building:** Identify areas for improvement (e.g., bank reconciliations, cash book maintenance) and guide school staff.
13. **Good Practices Documentation:** Document successful SIG uses, especially for services for children with disabilities and resource management.
14. **Exit Meeting:** Conduct an exit meeting with schools and districts to discuss findings and recommendations.
15. **Strategic Recommendations:** Provide recommendations on addressing key bottlenecks.
16. **Final Reports:** Submit final reports to schools and UNICEF within a month of visits, including findings and strategic recommendations.

17. **Fraud Risk Matrix:** Create a fraud risk matrix, scoring deviations in SIG practices and ranking schools based on fraud likelihood.
18. **Final Report:** Submit an overall report to UNICEF summarizing strengths, weaknesses, and actionable recommendations for addressing weaknesses and capacity development.
19. **The audit** will include a comprehensive review of SIG implementation, financial management, and procurement practices, aiming to improve efficiency, transparency, and compliance.
20. **Dissemination:** Prepare two power point presentations for the SIG Rapid Assessment and SIG Verification summarizing strengths, weaknesses, and actionable recommendations for addressing weaknesses and capacity development. The presentations to be presented to the Education Forum such as the Education Coordination Group.

Expected Deliverables for SIG verification

The verification and assessment processes will produce a set of comprehensive deliverables designed to support ongoing improvement and accountability in the management of School Improvement Grants (SIG). The deliverables are structured to ensure transparency, facilitate decision-making, and foster best practices.

The below eight deliverables will be submitted to UNICEF at the same time.

1. **Verification Reports:** Each school will produce a detailed report, signed, and stamped by the school, summarizing the findings, observations, recommendations, and capacitybuilding activities conducted during the verification visit. These reports should adhere to the agreed-upon template to maintain consistency and reliability.
2. **Exit Meeting Report:** This report will summarize the key discussions and outcomes of the exit meetings with District Schools Inspectors (DSIs), highlighting major findings, recommendations for improvements, and any suspicions of fraud. This will ensure all stakeholders are aligned and informed about the outcomes and next steps.
3. **Good Practices Report:** A document that captures successful practices and strategies in SIG implementation, especially those benefiting children with disabilities, incomegenerating activities, construction projects, effective funds management, and the use of learning resources. This report aims to replicate and scale up effective practices across other schools.
4. **Major Findings Report:** A comprehensive analysis highlighting the strengths and weaknesses identified during the verification process. It will provide robust recommendations to address identified internal control and performance issues. Where applicable, it will include detailed information regarding any suspicions of fraud, supporting the implementation of corrective measures.
5. **Verification Database:** A detailed and searchable database compiling all findings from the verification processes. This database will serve as a valuable tool for ongoing monitoring, future verifications, and strategic planning and to be shared with UNICEF.

6. **Fraud Risk Matrix:** This matrix will use the “Fraud Propensity Score” to evaluate the fraud risk associated with each deviation found during the verification process. The matrix will help prioritize areas for immediate action and ongoing monitoring to mitigate risks.
7. **Feedback Meeting Reports:** These reports will summarize the discussions and feedback from meetings with Head Office, Provincial, and District personnel, ensuring that all levels of the education administration are informed and engaged in the improvement process.
8. **Final Report Consolidation:** In cases where multiple agencies are involved in the verification process, one designated agency will consolidate all findings into a final, comprehensive SIG verification report. This ensures coherence and facilitates unified and strategic decision-making.
9. **Dissemination:** Prepare power point presentations for the SIG Verification report summarizing strengths, weaknesses, and actionable recommendations for addressing weaknesses and capacity development. The presentations to be presented to the Education Forum such as the Education Coordination Group.

Methodology for Rapid Assessment

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

The independent firm will specifically:

1. Based on the list of schools receiving school improvement grants, formulate and submit to MoPSE and UNICEF a **work plan** for a consensus on the time frame for field visits.
2. Review the **existing rapid assessment tool** for the SIGs under review (SIG Complementary, Regular SIG and SIG WASH Funding).
3. Collect data on the **purchasing power of the grants disbursed:**
 - Gather information on the functionality of Nostro accounts detailing challenges encountered by schools.
 - Assess the purchasing power of schools in light of transactions made by schools.
 - Assess whether schools can transact with service providers that do not have Nostro accounts.
 - Identify schools that obtained quotes in both RTGs & USD before procurement.
 - Explore any banking challenges by schools using Nostro Accounts
 - Identify challenges encountered by schools due to not having cash at hand.
4. Highlight how the **current economic situation impacts the schools’ use of SIG** and the challenges faced in utilizing these funds.
5. Review the **process of procurement/contracting for supplies** and services and assess whether it is **transparent, competitive, and consistent** with the financial management guidelines.
6. Establish whether **District Schools Inspectors play a role** in the procurement processes by the schools using the grant.

7. Prepare and submit to UNICEF **final report no more than one month after the field visits** to the school to share findings and recommendations.
8. Overall, the Rapid Assessment Report should highlight **the challenges** the schools faced in using their funds, **the potential risks** resulting from them, and how your **recommendations** can mitigate them.
9. Prepare **power point presentations for the SIG Rapid Assessment report** summarizing strengths, weaknesses, and actionable recommendations for addressing weaknesses and capacity development. The presentations to be presented to the Education Forum such as the Education Coordination Group.

Key deliverables for Rapid Assessment:

1. Report on the **major findings of the assessment** among the sample. It should outline schools' challenges, potential risks, mitigation measures to address them, and recommendations to improve SIG management.
2. **Database on rapid assessment findings.**
3. Consolidation of **Rapid assessment report** including a summarized power point representation by one agency if more than one agency is selected for the rapid assessment exercise.
4. Prepare **power point presentations for the SIG Rapid Assessment report** summarizing strengths, weaknesses, and actionable recommendations for addressing weaknesses and capacity development. The presentations to be presented to the Education Forum such as the Education Coordination Group.

The Verification and Rapid Assessment will be conducted as follows:

Description	When	Final reports due by
2025 Verification	Between May and July 2025	Mid-September 2025
2025 Rapid Assessment	Between May and July 2025	Mid-September 2025

The above-stated reports are expected at the same time as the verification and rapid assessments are done concurrently.

Number of schools to be verified and frequency, per type of SIG.

Year	Indicative # of schools	Frequency
2025 SIG Regular Verification	210	1

2025 SIG WASH	3	1
2025 SIG complementary	25	1
2025 Rapid Assessment	50	1
Total Budget	288	

Payment Terms

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

No	Deliverable	Timeline	Budget
2025 SIG Verification			
1	Inception Report which includes narrative methodology, Work plan including schedule and draft tools for use in verification exercise.	30 May 2025	10% of consultancy fees
2	Consolidated Inception Meeting with key stakeholders to present the inception report and workplan with MoPSE and the enumerators for both SIG Verification and Rapid Assessment.	09 June 2025	5% of consultancy fees
3	Draft of overall report on findings of the 2025 verification including:	31 August 2025	20% of consultancy fees

4	□ Final verification report which reflects feedback from UNICEF and MoPSE to the draft report, □ a power point presentation of the finding's presentation of the findings to the selected MoPSE education forum. □ 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. □ The report should not only describe the situation but also provide sound analytical assessment with solid recommendations	30 September 2025	35% of consultancy fees
2025 SIG Rapid Assessment			
1	Inception Report which includes narrative methodology, Work plan including schedule and draft tools for use in verification exercise.	30 May 2025	10% of consultancy fees
2	Draft of overall report on findings of the 2025 Rapid Assessment.	31 August 2025	5 % of consultancy fees
3	Final report of Rapid Assessment with responses to comments. The report should not only describe the situation but also	30 September 2025	15% of consultancy fees
No	Deliverable	Timeline	Budget

	provide sound analytical assessment with solid recommendations. □ a power point presentation of the findings and presentation of the findings to the selected MoPSE education forum. □ documentation on good practices. □ hard and soft copies of signed and stamped school rapid assessment reports for 50 of schools verified (reflecting completion of exit meetings with schools and districts, recommendations and capacity building conducted during the verification exercise)		
	Total		100%

Reporting

The contract will be up to 31 December 2025, 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
2. STRATEGY, METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH • Quality of proposed approach/ methodology. • Timeline proposed. • 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.		25

3. PROPOSED TEAM AND PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION • Structure of Management Team, relevant experience, qualifications ○ Team leader ○ Lead analyst for writing the analytical reports.	25
○ Number and quality of personnel in the Proposal who will conduct the spot check or verifications ○ Other team members with relevant experience of similar scope, complexity and qualifications, Professional expertise and knowledge. • Quality of local partner(s) included as sub-contractor(s)	
4. Evidence-supported TECHNICAL CAPACITY and ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE • Range and depth of experience with similar projects, contracts, and clients. • Financial status of Institution at least past 2 years audited financial statements • Evidence of similar assignments undertaken in Africa preferably in the SubSaharan region, within the past 5 years. • Evidence and availability of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policy and PSEA Certified members in the proposed team. • Evidence of duty of care for prevention against infectious diseases (provide any policies and procedures) NOTE: Institutions that fail to submit relevant documentation that 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 based on documents submitted for review in the Proposal.	15
Total technical marks	70
Financial Proposal	

5. FINANCIAL Assessment/review will include: • Summary of costs. • Breakdown of remuneration • Reimbursable expenses • 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. • Period of validity of the proposal. NOTE: As the most 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.	30
TOTAL MARKS	100

Technical Proposal (s) scoring 70% (=Score of 49 out of 70) or more following Proposal Evaluation will be short-listed and included for review of Analysis and Evaluation on The Financial Offer.

Elements to factor when preparing the technical and financial proposals

Items description	2025 Verifications	2025 Rapid Assessments
Number of Schools	238	50.00
Frequency	1.00	1.00
Schools per Verification/Rapid Assessment	238	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)		
Man, days of Senior lead analyst		
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)		

Year	# of schools	Frequency
2025 SIG Verification	213	1.00
2025 SIG WASH	3	1.00
2024 SIG Complementary	25	1.0
2025 Rapid Assessment	50	1.00

Note: The time estimates above apply to 2024-2025 verifications and 2024-2025 rapid assessments

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

Standard Financial proposal forms are attached in Annex.

Expected Background and Experience

This is an institutional consultancy.

Institutions not based in Zimbabwe must partner with a local institution that registered under the laws of Zimbabwe and must provide the full profile, detailed qualifications and experience of the local partner. The independent firm will be a reputable professional auditing and /or accounting firm. The company will be able to verify the use of SIG using the United Nations Sustainable Goals (UNSDG) | Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers Framework to all the target schools as outlined in these TORs. It will be familiar with Government of Zimbabwe policies and procedures in financial and procurement management (Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe). The independent 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 of Government Public Finance procedures.
- The team leader must have at least 10 years of experience in audit and 2 years of relevant experience in the proposed area of assignment.
- There should be a senior lead analyst in the team
- Demonstrated experience in undertaking capacity-building assignments of a 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 the 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 people 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 independent firm will however be required to closely liaise with the SIG Team from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.
- The independent 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 if the deliveries do not meet its requirement.

Management and Quality Assurance

The independent 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 oversee 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 training
- 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

Process and Criteria

A technical proposal must include a detailed technical description of the methodology to be used for the work described above, together with a proposed timeline, description of key stages to be carried out and an activity chart (GANTT chart).

A financial proposal for the activities listed must also be included and can be submitted as an attachment to the technical proposal and to be submitted as one package.

General Conditions: Procedures and Logistics

Policy both parties should be aware of:

- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the Contractor.
- No member of the contracting company may travel prior to contract agreement and signature.
- UNICEF Zimbabwe Country Office requesting Sections is responsible for all costs related to travel and related to the required assignment.
- Members of the contracting company will not have supervisory responsibilities or authority on the UNICEF budget.

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/ per diems in its financial proposal.

SIG 2025 Utilization Criteria

Utilization Criteria for School Improvement Grants (SIG) Regular 2025

Introduction

Since 2013, the education sector is receiving funds for SIG from the Education Development Fund (EDF) and is being implemented by the MoPSE through UNICEF. For the year 2025, both EDF TEACH, and Global Partnership for Education System Transformation Grant will support Regular SIG.

The SIG provides funding to financially constrained P3/S3 Registered and satellite (primary & secondary) schools including special schools. The funds are used to cover non-personnel and non-capital resource demands in the school to enable schools to cover their most basic needs. The basic needs are decided at school level and set out in the School Development Plan (SDP). The activities in the SDP can be funded by various means. However, for any activity to be funded through the SIG, it must be an eligible item. Each year, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) together with the Donors, UNICEF and other Development partners review the utilization criteria which stipulates the eligible and ineligible items and agree on any changes to be incorporated.

The set of eligible and ineligible items are reviewed to ensure that SIG remains responsive to emergent needs and address the prevailing financial situation in the country enhancing value for money on the utilisation of the SIG. Thus, the eligibility of items evolves depending on the prevailing context.

To NOTE:

1. Some items can be deemed eligible for specific purposes. Those are spelt out in the eligible items list below. No other exceptions are allowed to be funded through the SIGs. Any deviation from the SDP must be approved in writing by the DSI and should be kept on file and shared with UNICEF. **These deviations must fall within the eligible criteria.**
2. Any ineligible purchase or any transaction not supported by invoices and receipts, will be treated as amounts owing to the school by the accounting officer (school head) and reimbursement of the funds will be required.

Revised Eligibility/Utilization Criteria for 2025

COMPONENT	ELIGIBLE ITEMS	INELIGIBLE ITEMS
Replacing fees or levies for OVC	None	– No levy or fee for Orphans & Vulnerable Children (OVC) should be charged to SIG. – SIG is not to be used for settling debts incurred by the school.

Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM)	– Teaching guides and facilitation materials approved by MoPSE. – Science kits, laboratory supplies and Technical and Vocational kits approved by MoPSE.	– All textbooks, exercise books and workbooks, teaching guides and facilitation materials, not approved by MoPSE. – Office equipment, including photocopiers and computers.
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COMPONENT	ELIGIBLE ITEMS	INELIGIBLE ITEMS
	– Small teaching and learning equipment, such as compasses, protractors, etc. – Blackboard chalk/ whiteboard markers, – Pens, pencils, markers, and exercise books. – Readers and textbooks approved by MoPSE. – Study guides and other relevant Teaching Learning materials for learners to use at home when schools are closed, that are approved by MoPSE. – IT related teaching and learning material replacing of computer accessories and consumables, and network accessories up to US\$100.	– Purchase of laptops, tablets, phones, server, printer, photocopier. – All teaching and learning material and equipment for use outside the school. – Heritage studies and Family Religion and Moral Education (FAREME) cannot be procured using Donor funds.

Special needs provisions	– Maintenance and repair of orthotic spare parts as prescribed by the Ministry of Health and Child Care. – MOPSE approved Software for teaching and learning. – Adapted toilets and hand washing units or basins to support the mainstreaming of special needs pupils in schools. – Adapted Teaching and Learning Materials and small equipment. Disability-adaptive teaching and learning materials, including for technical and vocational learning areas for pupils in inclusive settings. – Radios for pupils with sensory impairments. .	– Special needs materials for children who are not enrolled at the school.
School running costs	– Transporting textbooks and Teaching and Learning materials purchased. – Office supplies, including stationery, pens, pencils, toner/ink, and other small items.	– Sitting allowances for any meeting. – Purchase of vehicles and vehicles running costs and maintenance. – Payment of better Schools Programme Zimbabwe

COMPONENT	ELIGIBLE ITEMS	INELIGIBLE ITEMS
	– Airtime allowances for any staff, if approved by DSI, up to maximum \$100 USD. This amount can increase only if there is natural disaster emergency and to be approved by DSI.	(BSPZ) and other Association fees.

Furniture & Equipment	— Purchase of school desks and chairs for use in the classroom by pupils and teachers, including disability-adapted chairs and desks as prescribed by the Ministry of Health and Childcare. — Repair of school desks and chairs for use in the classroom by pupils and teachers. — Purchase of Chubb door, safe and screen door for safe room. — Adapted desks and other school furniture to support the mainstreaming of special needs pupils in schools, as prescribed by the MOHCC. — Purchase of barbed wire only for perimeter fencing to keep away animals not exceeding \$100 of grant.	— Purchase and repair of all furniture for use outside the classroom or the school, including office furniture. — Office equipment, including photocopiers and computers. — Office furniture.
Hygiene and Sanitation	— Toilets and toilet blocks, hygiene equipment such as wash basins and other hand washing structures (including mass handwashing stands) — Water purification tablets and water guard. — Waste disposal facility and the purchase of MoHCC approved materials for the manufacture of reusable sanitary pads. — Construction and rehabilitation of water infrastructure (including shallow wells, water storage tanks, rainwater harvesting systems, etc.), gutters and water storage. — Purchase of Personal Protective equipment and hygiene kits (masks, handwashing soap, sanitizer, material to make	— Drilling of a borehole. — Construction and rehabilitation of water and sanitation infrastructure in schools and buildings that are not owned by the school authority.

COMPONENT	ELIGIBLE ITEMS	INELIGIBLE ITEMS
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	masks). A school can use up to \$200 USD.	
Minor Infrastructural repairs	– Minor repair of broken items and areas of school infrastructure, including windows, doors, ceilings, classroom fittings, roofs if parents contribute the nonspecialized labor for such repairs or work under qualified supervision. – Procurement of only window and door frames, for construction. – Ramps, paths, rails and other structures to support the mainstreaming of special needs pupils in schools, including Physical Education (PE) , sport and technical and vocational equipment. – Safe room for storage of examination papers. Note that only \$300 of the total SIG amount received can be used for minor repairs. N/B: No construction in 2025 for Satellite schools or major rehabilitations for Registered P3 schools.	– Construction and rehabilitation of school buildings. – Teacher housing, hostels, dormitories, and boarding houses. – Construction and rehabilitation of buildings that are not owned by the school authority. – Accessories and building furnishing such as floor tiles, curtain blinds etc. – Construction of <u>Temporary structures</u>. – Payment for labor or technical support for construction.
Personnel: salaries and allowances	None	– All types of personnel salaries and benefits, including salary supplements, allowances and ‘teacher incentives. – Construction workers or any other staff hired to provide support to the school.
Climate Adaptation initiatives (including income generation)	– Climate Adaptation initiatives or ‘greening of schools’ e.g., small	– Labour costs and other technical fees.

	scale solarization, for example (for charging stations, lighting),	Costs of rental/lease of land for growing food.
COMPONENT	ELIGIBLE ITEMS	INELIGIBLE ITEMS
	woodlots (fruit trees or wind breaks), school nutrition gardens. A school can use up to \$300 of funds received including for: - Small chick brooders/hatchery equipment - Inputs for viable income generating activities such as seeds, plants, fertilizer, animal husbandry (chickens, piglets, rabbits etc.), apiaries (beekeeping), aquaculture(fish) feeds and small irrigation equipment (water tanks, gardening tools, drip kits) - Inputs to support Home Grown Sustainable School Feeding (HGSSF) - Costs of tools for growing food for school garden when it is used for the Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) programme	

SIG COMPLEMENTARY 2024 Utilisation Criteria

Utilization criteria for School Improvement Grant (SIG) Complementary Funding 2024

Context

The complementary funding is a component of GPE System Transformation Grant being implemented by the MoPSE. It is aimed at supporting Satellite schools to meet the requirements for registration. The funding is targeting Satellite schools is meant to complement the construction of classrooms and WASH facilities at the selected schools.

To implement complementary funding, MoPSE together with Education Coordination Group (ECG) members agreed on a utilization criterion which stipulates eligible and ineligible items. The Complementary funding is to be used to support aspects of construction at school level and should be consistent with the utilization criteria set out below. The construction must be on approved site with a site plan obtained from Local Government and should conform to MoPSE building standards. Building officers to inspect and approve different stages of construction. These funds cannot be used for **construction of temporary structures**.

The utilization criteria is informed by The Secretary Circular Minute Number 7 of 2019 which gave a special waiver to satellite schools established between 2000 and 2018 to enable them to be registered schools and improve on access quality education provision.

Utilization Criteria

Component	ELIGIBLE ITEM	INELIGIBLE ITEM
Purchasing building materials	Building materials for classroom, storage room, toilets and handwashing e.g cement, doors, roofing sheet, windows, bricks as per the specifications provided by MoPSE	- Procuring learners desks, chairs, teachers' desks - Computers, tablets, (for learners and teachers), internet services
Construction	Completion of construction of classrooms, safe room for storage of examination papers and WASH (toilets & handwashing) - Completion of construction of Teacher housing.	- Construction of school buildings for which funds have not been approved. - Construction of buildings that are not owned by the school authority. - Accessories and building furnishing such as floor tiles, curtains blinds etc
Equipment	Purchase of Chubb door, safe and screen door for safe room.	Any other equipment not Chubb door or screen door

Transport costs	• Payment for transporting materials purchased for construction of classrooms, storage room, teacher's housing, and WASH facilities.	• Travel and subsistence for non-GPE Complementary administrative purposes.
Component	ELIGIBLE ITEM	INELIGIBLE ITEM
		• No sitting allowances for any meeting • No airtime allowances
Labour costs	• In exceptional cases payment of labour charges will be allowed upon DSI's discretion (when the school is not able to pay for labour costs involved for construction, repair, fitting, plumbing). Schools can pay labour charges to a maximum of <u>10%</u> of the total complementary funding, they receive. <u>Written approval by DSI to be filed by the school.</u>	

Note the following:

- Any ineligible purchase or transaction not supported by invoices and receipts will be treated as amounts owned by the accounting officer (school head) to the school and reimbursement will be required.
- Funds to be expended within 6 months and acquittal and report to be submitted to district office

SIG WASH 2025 Utilisation Criteria

Utilization criteria for School Improvement Grant (SIG) WASH 2025

Context

The School Improvement Grants (SIG) WASH programme is being implemented by the MoPSE and aims at enhancing access to safe water by learners and teachers through establishing and rehabilitation of water sources.

To implement SIG WASH, MoPSE together with UNICEF agreed on a set of eligible and ineligible items. The SIG WASH is to be used to support the WASH aspects at the school that are consistent with the utilization criteria (set out below). Schools to be guided by the general comments provided for each component for quality assurance. **Every expenditure is subject to approval by DSI and the District Water Sanitation sub-committee (DWSSC). Schools to submit reports to the district office, which are then shared with the PED and programme manager at Head Office.**

Utilization Criteria for WASH Programme

Component	Eligible Items/costs	Ineligible items	Additional Notes
Provision of water services in schools	B-type Bush pumps - Complete Pump heads - Galvanized Iron Pipes - Galvanized Iron Rods - Brass cylinders - Brass foot valves - Wooden blocks - Pump handles - Related labour costs for the pump mechanic - Other specified bush pump spares (refer to Annex 1 with prices guide)	- Tool kits for pump mechanics - Apron Molds, can be sourced from Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (RIDA) former DDF - Fencing materials can be sourced from community members. - Community members labor support to the rehabilitation. Local materials (<i>pit sand, river</i>)	- Repairs need to be done by a trained pump mechanic who has access to appropriate tools. Assistance can be sought from Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (RIDA) - There are lots of non-standard B-Type Bush Pump components on the market, pre-delivery inspection (PDI) of spares should be done using Government recommended inspection checklist before payment to suppliers. PDIs are conducted by RIDA trained staff. - Schools are encouraged to cluster together for the procurement so that the PDIs are easier to manage, spares can be delivered in bulk hence reducing operational costs. - All borehole repair works to be accompanied with a certificate of completion from RIDA.

Component	Eligible Items/costs	Ineligible items	Additional Notes
		<i>sand, concrete stones-unless stated otherwise</i>) are community contributions when required for headwork repairs.	5. Prices guide are given in the annex 1
	Existing Submersible pump system (Solar powered or direct electric powered) - • Pumps • Solar panels • Pipes (all sizes, class and types) • Flanges, connectors, bends and other accessories • Valves • Taps • Tanks or tank repairs • Electric cables • Electricals • Related labour costs	• Excavation and filing works for pipeline. These are to be part of the community contribution. • Local materials (<i>pit sand, river sand, concrete stones-unless stated otherwise</i>) are community contributions when required for headwork repairs.	• Work to be done by qualified artisan(s) with experience in the use of solar power • Use of solar power is relatively new in Zimbabwe, hence most qualified artisans to work on this are hired from the private sector. Oversight support on electrical works can be obtained from Department of Public Works or ZINWA.
Borehole drilling	• Drilling to Standards Association of Zimbabwe stipulated standards (ZWS standard number 678).	• Dry boreholes • Materials not meeting standards association stipulations	• Successful boreholes to ensure minimum 0.25 litres/ second water secured. Any yield less than that is deemed unsuccessful

	Geophysical surveys		Geophysical surveys to be done using a scientific method,
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Component	Eligible Items/costs	Ineligible items	Additional Notes
	Water sampling		with reports shared with relevant government departments (RIDA, ZINWA, Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate responsible for Water) - All drilling works to be supervised by RIDA to ensure casing to the bottom, correct class and size casing, sanitary seal installation and correct siting. - All drilling works <u>must</u> be certified by DWSSC technical team, led by RIDA at district office before payments (<i>to ensure payments are based on correct depths, adherence to required standards and materials specifications</i>). - Signed copies of certificates of completion to be shared with MoPSE & UNICEF. - Schools to have a wet hole policy/agreement with the drilling contractors to ensure they are paying for where water has been secured to avoid occurrence of costs on dry boreholes that will be paid off without securing water. Borehole final depth shall not be less than 30m depth. - Water sampling to be done in accordance with ZWS 560. .

Construction or repair of Handwashing facilities and toilets	• Construction of toilet blocks and other handwashing structures (including mass handwashing stands)		• Construction or repair of handwashing facilities and toilets is to be done only once water is available at the school.
Environmental Cleaning incl Hand hygiene practices	• Basic PPEs for cleaning materials (boots, masks, gloves, eye protection goggles or a face shield, work	• Posters • Fliers	• Wipe down often-touched surfaces such as door handles, window nobs, eating tables, railings with wet rag or a household cleaning spray with
Component	Eligible Items/costs	Ineligible items	Additional Notes
	suit) • Chlorine-based disinfectants (ensure a concentration equivalent to 0,5% of active chlorine for surfaces and 70% of ethyl alcohol for disinfection of objects) • Soap (liquid soap or soap bars, 33 liters per 100 learners for 3 months for liquid soap or 75kg of green bars per 100 learners for 3 months) • Mops • Brooms • Mutton cloth • Covered bins (for classrooms) • Plastic jerry can with tap for hand washing (one per class) • Tripod stands • Up to 10% of the total funds can be used for the above items under environmental cleaning		disinfectant • Posters and fliers can be requested from UNICEF or other development partners in the area • Hand washing facilities to be placed at ageappropriate heights and accessible to learners with limited mobility • Foot operated water systems preferred as they reduce contamination at handling • Water requirements for hand washing range from 0.5-2 liters per learner per day • Hand washing stations should have soak away pits or a drainage channel which can be used for watering flowers

***Note the following**

- *The Province and District Water and Sanitation Sub-Committee (DWSSC) and UNICEF will share technical specifications for drilling per district.*
- *DWSSC technical team with the approval and certification mandates to be engaged ahead of works commencement to support on final school selection (due to their prior knowledge on ongoing water activities) selection of contractors and monitoring of works.*
- *MoPSE DSI to work with the DWSSC to remove from the potential list of schools, any selected schools where drilling was attempted at least 3 times in the past with no success*
- *Pre-delivery inspection of materials by DWSSC representatives is prerequisite before payment and delivery to ensure that schools will not procure sub-standard materials.*
- *All water source development (borehole drilling, borehole rehabilitation, civil constructions etc.) certifications to be done by DWSSC technical team, led by RIDA at district office ahead of payment.*
- *DWSSC members with particular reference to the following members -MoPSE, RIDA and RDC to supervise to ensure adherence to standards as stipulated in the Drilling to Standards Association of Zimbabwe (ZWS standard number 678).*
- *Funds to be expended within 6 months and acquittal and report to be submitted to district office accompanied with certificates of completion.*
- *Funds not exhausted or not able to use are to be returned to UNICEF*
- *Any transaction not supported by invoices will be treated as amounts owing by the accounting officer (school head) at the schools.*
- *Any ineligible purchase will be treated as amounts owing by the accounting officer and reimbursement of the funds will be required.*