

**ANNEX B
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Disability Inclusive Sub-Sector Analysis for Supporting
Better Inclusive Early Learning and Development at Scale
(BIELDS) in Zimbabwe**

Summary

Purpose	<p>To conduct a Zimbabwe Disability Subsector Analysis in the Education Sector, outlining the intersectionality of disability and system capacity gaps to support better inclusive early learning in Zimbabwe</p> <p>Objectives: Overall, this assignment aims to conduct a disability-inclusive pre-primary subsector analysis (DIPPSA) reflecting intersectionality aspects with other underserved populations, the system capacity gaps, and disaggregated indicators for gender and disability status. The assignment will collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data on disability in general and in the education sector in particular for input into the Inclusive early learning research agenda. More specifically, this assignment is seeking to do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An inclusive ECD subsector analysis and plan using the UNICEF Build to Last Pre-Primary Subsector Conceptual Framework and Tools - Intersectionality analysis - System gap analysis
Estimated Budget	USD 120,000.00
Location	Selected districts in Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Masvingo, Harare and Bulawayo provinces
Duration	6 months
Start Date	15 June – 31 December 2025
Reporting to	Education Specialist (Access and Quality)
Budget Code/Grant	6260/A0/07/105/001/007 GRANT: SC 240528

1. Background

Inclusive education refers to the provision of universal access to guaranteed learning opportunities, and provision for all children to learn in local schools, with other children of their age regardless of

gender, disability, talent or any other discriminatory factor, through responsive learner-centered approaches. Several barriers towards inclusive early learning development and disability inclusion include a lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials, coupled with a lack of assistive devices for physical disabilities perpetuates exclusion for the marginalised and the disabled children. Children with invisible disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder, depression, and learning and

Page 1 of 12 - TORs Disability Inclusive sub-sector analysis for supporting better inclusive learning in Zimbabwe.

thinking differences such as Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyspraxia, and dyslexia (and other), are usually left out from accessing inclusive quality education due to limited provision of adapted teaching and learning materials. On the other hand, poor attitudes from the community, parents, school systems and other learners has resulted in children with disabilities being at risk of being left out from enrollment in schools. Limited appropriate infrastructure to foster inclusive education for Special Needs Education (SNE) remains an issue. This relates to physical barriers - requiring support to ensure that all activity and school venues are accessible and do not present barriers to inclusion and that the environment supports the availability of appropriate assistive devices. The delayed adoption of the Inclusive Education Policy has delayed a synchronization of programming on disability inclusion in education.

Globally, an estimated 95% of the 53 million children with disabilities under five, live in Low-and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs), and experience poor affordability, availability and accessibility to regular and targeted services according to the UN Interagency Group on Mortality Estimation. *Levels and trends in child mortality report, 2019*. Inadequate preparation of pre-primary teachers, exacerbated by lack of systemic frameworks, standards and regulations, inhibits scaling of differentiated play-based pedagogies and coordination systems that have proven valuable for disability inclusion.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognizes that all children, including children with disabilities, are full members of their family, community, and society. Significantly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is linked to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and its implementation to foster the incorporation of disability inclusion perspective in all aspects of SDG implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

It is estimated that 1 in 10 children in Zimbabwe have disability and of these 1 in 3 are enrolled in school. A 2020 report by UNICEF and the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) indicated that only about 1 in 3 children with disabilities have access to education, meaning that around 30% of children with disabilities are enrolled in school. The disparity is often due to physical, social, and economic barriers, including inadequate school infrastructure, negative societal attitudes, and lack of accessible learning materials¹. EMIS 2024 shows that there are 62,831 pupils with learning difficulties with 49,45 learners (22,132 girls) in primary school and 13,372 learners (6,365 females) in secondary school. The most common impairment in both cases was difficulty in remembering.

Inclusive education means the provision of universal access to guaranteed learning opportunities, and provision for all children to learn in local schools, with other children of their age regardless of their disability, talent or any other discriminatory factor, through responsive learner-centred approaches. However, notwithstanding the developments towards disability inclusion, there remain a range of challenges that can impact on the effectiveness of all these promising interventions. A key challenge relates to the lack of a systematic way of assessing disabilities and referring Persons with Disability and Children with Disability to a comprehensive and holistic range of government services and programmes, and social protection. In most instances the design and operational features of the programmes themselves are not disability inclusive.

¹ UNICEF. (2020). The State of the World's Children Report: Children with Disabilities in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT). (2021). Disability Statistics Report.

The Zimbabwe Government in Section 22 of the Constitution Amendment (No 20) 2013, addresses the responsibility of the State and its institutions on the rights of persons with disabilities, while Section 83 addresses the rights of persons with disabilities. Zimbabwe has also endorsed the Marrakesh Treaty to facilitate Access to Published Works for persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise print Disabled in 2019. The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all, including for children with disabilities. The Education Amendment Act (2019) provides for equal access to education for all children, and it is supported through the National Disability Policy (2021), and the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2020-2025). Apart from establishing a Department of Disability Affairs in the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MoPSSLW), the Government has made several steps towards strengthening the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and to addressing their concerns, including through:

- Appointment of a Special Advisor on National Disability Issues in the Office of the President and Cabinet in 2017.
- Appointment of two Disability Senators that are nominated by persons with disabilities themselves to champion their cause.
- Establishment of a National Disability Board. The Board is a statutory entity in terms of Section 4 of the Disabled Persons Act (17:01) of 1992. The main objective of the National Disability Board is to protect, promote and ensure equal enjoyment of the rights of Persons with Disabilities in Zimbabwe.
- The development and approval of the National Disability Policy (NDP).
- Recognizing the critical role of inclusive early learning to achieve this vision, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) has institutionalized inclusive early childhood provision as part of the primary education cycle in every school. Following the 'Model Inclusive Infant Education Facility' (MIIEF) approach, schools make teaching-learning adaptations to promote inclusive early childhood education in schools, among other interventions. Additionally, through the innovative Learner Support Services (LSS), MoPSE has developed an early grade profiling system which enabled psychometric profiling of individual pupils at infant level (from ECD A to Grade 2) by identifying pupils strength including aptitudes, interests and personal attributes whilst tracking their skills and abilities. Concurrently, UNICEF is working with MoPSE to strengthen capacity in dealing and supporting children with hidden disabilities including learning disabilities.

Early identification of functional difficulties and disabilities among children is crucial in ensuring they maximize their development potential. It increases the likelihood that children with or at risk of developing disabilities are provided with early intervention services, and further delays in the child's development are prevented. Early identification can also help families, healthcare professionals, and specialists to provide appropriate specialized services to support the inclusion and participation of children with disabilities in schools and the wider community. In the context of education, identification is important to be able to determine appropriate pedagogical support, reasonable accommodation, and resources relevant to the needs of the child.

In 2023, MoPSE through the Learner Welfare and Psychological Services department conducted individual psychometric profiling of 1,392,651 early learners from ECD A to Grade 2 to identify their aptitudes, interests and personal attributes whilst tracking their identified gaps and support needs towards school retention. This initiative has the potential of driving MoPSE's Inclusive Education agenda through data that informs inclusive early learning among children in the country. While the profiling of all early grade learners is innovative, it needs systematic planning which includes decentralization of the data capture system to minimize the costs. In addition, in 2024, this profiling has been extended to all primary school pupils.

However, one of the significant challenges faced by children with disabilities and their families is the lack of follow-up support after screening and identification. Often, children with disabilities do not receive sufficient support, or when they do, the interventions provided are often unsuitable to their

actual needs. In some cases, screening and identification do not lead to the provision of interventions at all. This can be addressed by establishing an effective referral system and ensuring mainstream support services are accessible to children with developmental delays/disabilities and their families to receive proper interventions and specialized support for their growth and development.

While Zimbabwe has an Early learning policy in place, the inclusive education policy remains at cabinet level awaiting approval. This would be a milestone in moving the inclusive education agenda.

In response to these challenges, with funding from the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX), UNICEF Zimbabwe is among the three countries that will implement a research project called The Better Inclusive Early Learning and Development At Scale (BIELDS).

This research project aimed at generating knowledge on the evidence and capacity gaps in scaling the impact of early interventions for boys and girls with disabilities through quality, inclusive early childhood education systems in Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Ethiopia. Among other objectives, the project seeks to explore how to support children with disabilities through inclusive early childhood education systems with relevant coordination mechanisms and links with health and social work sectors. The project aims to define systemic frameworks, pathways, standards, and regulations to enable teachers to adopt inclusive and differentiated play-based pedagogies and coordination systems for disability-inclusive educational services in humanitarian contexts.

BIELDS will use the pre-primary Subsector Analysis tool to identify systemic factors that enable, incentivize or impede scaling of early interventions for children with disabilities through ECE systems. In this process, the three participating countries will adapt their approach to inclusion to contextual needs and strengths, with opportunities for cross-fertilization of ideas and processes as a core scaling strategy.

Through BIELDS, ZIMBABWE seeks to draw upon its Learner Support Systems to facilitate smooth transition of learners in all their diversities from inclusive early childhood education (ECE) into primary education. Identified solutions to key bottlenecks and systemic approaches to skill up ECE teachers at scale will be ranked through cost and financing simulations. A Country ECE tracker will be developed to monitor progress countries make in establishing quality inclusive ECE systems

2. Justification

To achieve, these results, UNICEF seeks to recruit a consultancy firm to undertake a disability inclusive pre-primary subsector analysis (DIPPSA) in Zimbabwe reflecting intersectionality with other underserved populations and disaggregated indicators for gender, disability and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) status.

3. Scope of the assignment

UNICEF has provisionally conceptualized this assignment with three components: i) Disability Inclusive sub-sector analysis using the UNICEF Build to Last Pre-Primary Subsector Conceptual Framework and Tools; ii) Intersectionality analysis; iii) system capacity gap assessment and action plan. These are the three assignments that the research should deliver on:

1) Disability inclusive Preprimary / ECD sub sector analysis

Following a qualitative methodology, the consultant will develop an Early Childhood Development sector analysis (Pre-primary) to identify systemic factors that enable, incentivize or impede scaling of early interventions for children with disabilities through ECE systems. This should look at the needs, strengths and opportunities for cross-fertilization of ideas and processes as a core scaling strategy.

A pre-primary subsector analysis has proven very useful for national stakeholders in agreeing on contextual priorities to advance early childhood education systems. It is expected that the results of the disability inclusive early childhood education subsector analysis will reflect intersectionality with other underserved populations and disaggregated indicators for gender, disability and location. The consultant must analyze both pupils and teachers' situation including their interactions.

A qualitative and quantitative analysis based on the use of all EMIS, HRMIS, SIGMIS, Learner support services database, district/Provincial and head office Operational Plans, all existing studies, key informant interviews, etc., is expected.

This will seek to answer the research question: What systemic anchors, core drivers, and coordination processes enable, incentivize, or impede the scale-up of early interventions for boys and girls with disabilities through ECE systems in Zimbabwe? Specifically, the firm will:

1. Conduct a situational analysis which will serve as an inception report.
2. Work with the Ministry of Education to review and contextualize the tools.
3. Analyze data from EMIS, HRMIS, SIGMIS, Learner support services database, district/Provincial and head office Operational Plans, all existing studies
4. Identify key informants and conduct key informant interviews.
5. Organize a pre-primary sub-sector analysis/diagnostic workshop with relevant stakeholders to identify root causes, challenges, priorities, and plan aimed at mitigating the root causes.
6. Develop and submit a draft report and plan for stakeholder's review and feedback.
7. Revise the draft report and plan and submit the final report.

Closely linked to the Pre-primary sub-sector analysis is the examination of ***the Intersectionality of children with disabilities*** with other underserved groups as applicable in the local context (e.g., based on gender, household wealth, urban/rural location, etc.) as unpacked below.

2) Intersectionality analysis

The consultant firm is expected to seek to generate knowledge and evidence from Zimbabwe on how to scale the impact of early interventions to support boys and girls with disabilities and their intersectionality with other underserved populations through quality inclusive ECE systems, their coordination mechanisms, and cross-sectoral linkages. The consultant is expected to not focus only on pupils but also on teachers and their interactions.

This will seek to answer the research question: How does intersectionality with gender equality, inclusion, and equity considerations inform the implementation of early intervention strategies for boys and girls with disabilities in Zimbabwe? It is expected that findings from the Intersectionality analysis will inform Social Behavior Change (SBC) strategies to engage communities on gender equality, equity, and inclusion more broadly while addressing specific issues of stigma and discrimination around disabilities.

3) System capacity gap assessment

This element of the consultancy seeks to unpack systemic, social, and economic gaps that make it difficult to foster disability inclusion in the country. Persons with disabilities continue to face numerous barriers to their full inclusion and participation in the life of their communities. Issues around accessibility/access to social services, economic opportunities, and associated policy issues for people with disabilities continue to promote exclusion for persons with disabilities. A specific sub-sector analysis is expected for the education sector (in conjunction with other sectors) regarding the barriers girls' and boys' face in accessing Inclusive quality education in Zimbabwe. It is expected

that findings from the system capacity gap assessment will enable appropriate recourse by the government and through a Whole of Government Approach, proactively design responses that leverage opportunities within the system, in supporting disability inclusion in education. The Holistic Organisational development plan, and all cross ministries plans are expected to be analysed along with key informant interviews across all relevant Ministries.

A detailed action plan drawn from the system capacity gap assessment is expected. Both stakeholders' interactions and workflow process will be described and analysed. The New Heritage Based curriculum will be analysed with the inclusive early learning lens.

It is expected that the proposed identification and referral mechanisms go beyond medical approaches to assessment and focus on the inclusive education models that are better aligned to the National Disability Policy's approach to disability issues in the education sector as well as global commitments to inclusive education.

4. No details

5. Deliverables and payment terms

The consultancy firm is expected to deliver the following:

Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline / Payments	% Payment
Develop an Inception Report outlining the Consultant's understanding of the TORs, how the assignment will be conducted and expected outcomes.	Inception report outlining proposed methodology, sample of qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, sampling of field data collection visits, geographical scope and workplan / GANTT Chart	10 days	12%
ECD subsector analysis, Intersectionality analysis and systems gap analysis - preliminary findings including from document review, field visits, primary Key Informant Interviews from MoPSE personnel and stakeholders at HO, Provinces, Districts and Schools, Organisation of Persons with Disabilities and any data collection in sampled/selected Districts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3 draft analytical reports on findings highlighting: Disability inclusive pre-primary subsector analysis (DIPPSA). 2. Intersectionality analysis report with other underserved populations. 3. The system capacity gaps report. <p>These should show disaggregated indicators for gender and disability status for use in the BIELDS project.</p>	100 days	76%

Validation of the findings by UNICEF/MoPSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ PowerPoint presentation on key findings, conclusions and recommendations □ Validation Report endorsed by UNICEF and MoPSE and the BIELDS community of practice in two countries. 	3 days	4%
Final Consolidated Report	The final report with all comments addressed approved by UNICEF including a summary of key findings and recommendations and a PowerPoint presentation	7 days	8
Total # of Days		120 Days	100%

6. Duration of the Assignment

The assignment is expected to last for a period of **4 months**, starting from 1 June 2025

7. Expected background and Experience

QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

Institution expertise

It is expected that this assignment will be done by an institutional consultancy firm gathering a team and a team leader. The consultancy firm needs to possess the following experience and expertise:

- Extensive knowledge and experience in early childhood education (ECE) programming in general and Inclusive Education and Gender in particular.
- Have practical experience in sector analysis and high-level synthesized materials development for disability and gender inclusion in the education sector in general and ECE in particular.

Team expertise

The specialized experience and additional competencies of the Team (the team leader and team members) are detailed below:

Team leader:

Minimum qualifications for the team leader shall include:

- Doctoral degree ECD, child/human development, child/developmental psychology, Special needs education, or other relevant social science areas;
- Experience in the development of education sector analysis materials and experience leading disability and gender inclusion sector analysis in Education;
- Substantial practical experience in developing disability and gender inclusion analysis in Education/ECE in Zimbabwe (10 years); five of which should be in international developing country context.
- Experience developing user-friendly content including reports and policy briefs for humanitarian and development contexts, working experience with the UN, particularly UNICEF desirable;
- Thorough understanding about the disability and gender inclusion in the ECE subsector
- Good knowledge of the disability inclusion, gender and ECE situation in Zimbabwe
- Good communication skills, especially tailoring and presenting information to various audience;
- Strong skills in interpreting research studies in developing quality materials in clear and concise language; and
- Fluency in English and local languages in Zimbabwe (speaking and writing).
- Previous experience in GPE processes is an asset

Team members:

The consulting firm must possess a team of experts who meet specified qualifications and have relevant experience.

- Strong foundational knowledge and experience in Early Childhood Education with a focus on gender and disability inclusion in a Humanitarian context
- Practical experiences in the development of sector analysis, policy synthesis, case study, accountability tracker, and others mentioned in the deliverables
- Strong communication knowledge and skills to develop user-friendly materials/reports.

QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

- Expertise in Education Economics

Desirable:

- Familiarity with Government of Zimbabwe procedures, and specifically the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education policies, systems and procedures in inclusive education.
- General knowledge of Education Management Information Systems
- Ability to use equity and gender-lens throughout the whole process.
- Inter relational skills in working with MoPSE officials.
- Previous work with UNICEF/other UN agencies or other national, regional, or international institutions (public or private) developing high- quality products.
- Evaluation skills among team members is an asset

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Team Leader

- Oversee the daily operations and activities of the team, ensuring that the project is completed on time and within budget.
- Lead the development and implementation of strategies to achieve project goals and meet desired expectations.
- Ensure that all deliverables meet the highest standards of quality and are delivered on time
- Serve as the primary point of contact between the team and UNICEF, as well as between team members and the consultancy reference group
- Provide regular updates to UNICEF and MOPSE on project status and any issues that need to be addressed

Common tasks and duties of the team members

- Using their specialised knowledge and skills, interact with MoPSE at national and sub-national levels through interviews, workshops and meetings to gather data including desk reviews
- Conducting data analysis and summarizing the analysis results in a clear and concise manner
- Managing different aspects of the project including timelines, resources and deliverables -
Preparing reports and delivering presentations on findings

8. Evaluation Criteria

The bidders should submit both technical and financial proposals separately.

Technical evaluation will consider the best proposed solution, the bidder’s capacity to start and deliver on time the services, compliance, and submission of all required documentation.

MANDATORY CRITERIA

These are Pass/Fail Criteria: Bidders either meet the requirement or they don't. There is typically no partial compliance.

Non-Negotiable: The requirements are generally not open for negotiation or alternative solutions.

Minimum Years of Experience for team leader of demonstrable Pass/fail experience in providing services of a similar nature and scope

Past Project References: Provide a minimum of three verifiable Pass /fail references from clients for whom they have completed similar projects within the last 3-5 Provides transparent, well-defined pricing structure (fixed, hourly, etc.). Pass/fail

8.1 Technical evaluation criteria

Technical offers will be scored out of **80 points**. Offers with scores less than **56/80** will be disqualified. A reference check will be conducted for companies/ institutions meeting the minimum technical requirements.

Item	Technical Evaluation Criteria	Max. obtainable	Points
1	Company/Institution		
1.1	Range and depth of organizational experience with similar projects	10	
1.2	Samples of previous similar work	5	
1.3	Client references	5	
	SUB TOTAL ITEM 1	20	
2	Company/institutions expertise		
2.1	Range and depth of company experience in similar service: Extensive knowledge and experience in early childhood education (ECE) programming in general and Inclusive Education and Gender in particular.	5	
2.2	Have practical experience in sector analysis and high-level synthesized materials development for disability and gender inclusion in the education sector in general and ECE in particular	5	
2.3	Have demonstrated experience in intersectionality analyses	10	
	SUB TOTAL ITEM 2	20	
3	Team profiles and availability		
3.1	<i>Leading expert:</i> Qualifications, expertise, and experience meet the criteria listed under Section 7. Profile required of the consulting firm. <i>Team members :</i> Qualifications, expertise, and experience meet the criteria listed under Section 7. Profile required of the consulting firm.	20	
	SUB-TOTAL ITEM 3	20	
4	Proposed Methodology and Approach		
4.1	<i>Proposed work plan and approach of implementation of the tasks as per the ToR</i>	10	
Item	Technical Evaluation Criteria	Max. obtainable	Points
4.2	<i>Implementation strategies, monitoring and evaluation, quality control mechanism</i>	5	
4.3	<i>Innovative approach: Sustainability performance measurements for contract</i>	5	

	SUB-TOTAL ITEM 4	20
	TOTAL TECHNICAL SCORES	80

8.2 Financial Proposal Structure

Weighted scoring Evaluation approach :

The total amount of points allocated for the financial proposal is [20]. The maximum number of points will be allotted to the lowest financial proposal that meets or exceeds the minimum required technical score of 56 out of 80 points. All other financial proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest financial, e.g.:

$$\text{Score for Financial proposal X} = (\text{Max. score for Financial proposal [20] Points}) \times (\text{Price of lowest priced proposal}) / (\text{Financial proposal X})$$

Technical and financial proposals will be evaluated separately. Each proposal will be assessed first on its technical merits and subsequently on its financial proposal. **The proposal obtaining the highest score overall after adding the technical and financial proposals scores and offering the best value for money and best interest of UNICEF will be recommended for the award of the contract.**

During this review, UNICEF may request that clarifications be provided as part of the technical evaluation.

The Bidder(s) achieving the highest combined technical and financial proposal score will (subject to any negotiations and the various other rights of UNICEF detailed in this TOR) be awarded the contract.

8.3 Financial evaluation

the following will be used for the financial evaluation:

- Summary of Costs
- Breakdown of Remuneration
- Reimbursable expenses

9. 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 signature.
- 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.

Application requirements: