

LINK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (LCD) INTERNATIONAL



Job Title	Scoping Study Consultant [Ugandan Education Specialist]
Remuneration	Daily Rate – to be confirmed during contract negotiations International Programme Director
Accountable to	<i>(work closely with Senior Programme Manager of LCD Uganda & Chair of project Steering Committee)</i>
Location	Kampala, Uganda
Period of Contract	40 days
Start Date	No later than 1 st February 2018, earlier if possible

ABOUT LINK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Link Community Development is a family of not for profit organisations working together to transform education for children and communities across impoverished rural areas of Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda and Uganda. Since our foundation in 1995 we have worked in 3,000 schools and improved the lives of over two million children through unique and effective school improvement models. We guide governments and educators to adopt low-cost solutions to improve learning and support for children, with a focus on literacy, numeracy and inclusion for the most marginalised children. Through a partnership delivery model which embeds piloting and learning within local systems, we influence changes to policy, practice and accountability on a national scale, and our interventions are regularly adapted and replicated by governments and NGOs in new countries and contexts. Link Community Development International (Link), based in Edinburgh, Scotland supports all project, M&E, fundraising, finance and governance activities in our five sub-Saharan partner countries.

The value of our approach is evidenced through a number of achievements:

- **In Malawi**, our work has enabled the Malawi Government to launch their first National Educational Standards, which are now implemented in every one of the country's 7,000 schools. Our specialist education projects have also improved the literacy of 35,000 children.
- **In Ethiopia**, our projects have improved education for 216,000 children across 200 schools, and involved 43,000 community stakeholders in school improvement, underpinning an attitudinal shift in how rural communities prioritise education. We have fostered strong working relationships with decentralised units of the Government, developed over a decade.
- **In Uganda**, we've supported 50,000 people displaced by conflict to return home and enrol their children in school, establishing community gardens and feeding programmes in schools.
- **In Ghana**, we've established 125 community schools and helped over 6,000 out-of-school children return to mainstream education.
- **In Rwanda**, we are working with government to strengthen national school improvement processes, empowering communities to improve their schools at the local level and supporting 25,000 children through their transition to secondary education.
- **Our impact** has been recognised internationally, most recently in a 2016 World Economic Forum White Paper¹, UNESCO's 2017/18 Global Education Monitoring Report² and a Universal Primary Education report by The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) in Uganda. We have also been invited to participate in the International Institute for Educational Planning's policy forum on 'Using school data to improve transparency and accountability in education', which is taking place in Manila in January 2018³.

¹ World Economic Forum White Paper "Unleashing Greatness: Nine Plays to Spark Innovation in Education", Sir Michael Barber and Joel Klein, July 2016

² UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, 2017/18, p.56

³ UNESCO Policy Forum on 'Using Open School Data to Improve Transparency and Accountability in Education', 24-26 January 2018

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Funding from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has enabled Link to undertake a piece of work from December 2017 to February 2019 in order to achieve the following short-term outcomes:

OUTCOME 1: A comprehensive understanding of the current approach and future plans of MoES and their partners, and the barriers they face, in relation to school improvement, community engagement, inspection services and integrated information systems

- **Output 1.1:** Improved communication and thorough engagement with MoES and DES to establish their current approach, plans and barriers in relation to the above.
- **Output 1.2:** Establishment of streamlined dialogue, direction and leadership for the project through the new Steering Committee.

OUTCOME 2: Collective learning by all stakeholders of the methods and next steps required to achieve transformational change in government and community accountability for school improvement

- **Output 2.1:** At least 15 individual stakeholders - organisations such as DES, district leaders for primary and secondary education, the Steering Committee and Donor Partners - are guided by a cohesive multi-stakeholder strategy outlining the methodology and workplan for the roll out of effective school improvement systems in Uganda.

OUTCOME 3: Improved capacity within Link to utilise past and current data and disseminate valuable knowledge and methodology globally.

- **Output 3.1:** Two MEL specialists within the Link family, contributing to the global education sector data bank and providing evidence towards the proposed strategy for improving systems in Uganda.
 - **Output 3.2:** Improved capacity and financial resilience within the existing Link International and Link Uganda teams (six staff in Edinburgh and three in Kampala), including appointment of two new programme staff for Link Uganda to lead the planning and delivery phases, and fundraising capacity to bring into place co-funding for work in Uganda as well as vital core funds.
 - **Output 3.3:** A more connected and effective Link family, benefiting from improved information governance and data-share platforms (41 staff across five countries).
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MAIN TASK

We will engage an experienced consultant or small team of consultants, to conduct a detailed and evidence-based scoping study to establish the current position and pipeline plans of MoES in relation to the critically important areas of school improvement in Uganda. These include: School improvement systems and processes; community mobilisation; school report cards; digitised inspection; national education standards; national roll-out of effective data collection systems.

The consultant will explore and record the detail and experience of a number of stakeholders who have been strategically involved in the Ugandan education improvement sector, which will include but not be limited to:

- The Directorate of Education Standards' (DES) work on Monitoring Learning Achievement, National Assessment of Performance in Education, and other relevant processes;
- Global Partnership for Education's funding for results-based programming;
- DFID's Strengthening Education Systems for Improved Learning (SESIL) project;
- World Bank's Uganda Teacher and School Effectiveness Project (UTSEP);
- STiR Education's and UWEZO's national roll outs;
- EduKan's STAR school self-evaluation model;
- Opportunity International's Pathways to Excellence for private schools; and
- EDUCATE's work on community accountability.

The study will document case studies, evidence of successes, recurring challenges and best practice, and will also assess Link's own SPR model for its current value and continued relevance in Uganda (SPR has been adopted fully in Malawi and partially in Link target schools in Uganda, Ethiopia and Ghana). We will also establish a new Steering Committee, chaired by the DES and Link Uganda which will involve the consultant and other stakeholders. The Committee will lead this project, collate and disseminate all findings and guide the strategic direction of future implementation work.

The main deliverables of the assignment are:

1. A comprehensive scoping study on School Improvement in Uganda. To include historical and current processes and future plans. An executive summary and an annex of all people contacted with contact details must be included.
 2. An MS presentation (powerpoint) of the main points of the report to be used for dissemination purposes.
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SCOPE OF WORK: EDUCATION IN UGANDA – THE ACCOUNTABILITY LANDSCAPE

Schools in Uganda, especially those in rural locations, are still critically overstretched and under-resourced, battling soaring rates of learner drop-out and teacher absenteeism. There are over 9 million pupils enrolled in school across the country, 86% of which are in primary education, and roughly 57% of 15-24 year olds did not start or complete primary school.⁴ In the context of poor quality education, learning outcomes are dire: just two out of ten primary 3 pupils can read and understand an English story, three out of ten can divide and just over half of children have achieved competence in a local language at primary 2 level by the time they are in primary 6⁵.

We have worked with the Government of Uganda since 2000 and during this time we have delivered School Performance Review (SPR) in over 500 schools in eight districts and supported the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) to integrate key accountability mechanisms from SPR into their core work. Currently MoES uses several different sets of indicators to measure how well schools are performing and guide improvements, including the inspection framework (developed with our technical assistance), outputs from the SPR, the Education Management Information System (quantitative data on school inputs), and Monitoring of Learning Achievement (testing learning outcomes). And recently, a MoES official commented on the lack of agreed standards at secondary level. This complex range of indicators makes it challenging for schools and government staff to know what a good school should look like and what they should aim to improve.

Social and citizen accountability is a vital area. UNESCO's 2017/18 Global Education Monitoring Report (GMR)⁶ defines accountability as calling on individuals and institutions to report how they tried to meet their responsibilities, a process that can help foster an equitable, high-quality education system. This is also explored in DFID's recent policy briefing on social accountability⁷. In Uganda, it has proven difficult for young people, parents and community members in rural communities with low literacy levels to hold their schools accountable and engage meaningfully in planning for improved service delivery. MoES recognises the value communities can bring to school improvement and have prioritised improving community engagement, but a lack of confidence, experience and capacity among district staff and headteachers severely limits the effectiveness of initiatives, and marginalised groups (such as those with disabilities or ethnic minorities) are often unintentionally excluded.

Sustainability is also an issue. The GMR details how true and sustained citizen accountability can be achieved through integrating monitoring activity into existing government processes, and cites examples of good practice from Link Malawi and Link Ethiopia programmes⁸, where regular and inclusive community involvement through our SPR tool has become embedded with formal government processes.

MoES recently launched their 2017/18 – 2019/20 Education and Sports Sector Strategic Plan⁹, which highlights the critical importance of strong school inspection systems and sustained community engagement and accountability, identifying these areas as priorities under Strategic Objective 2 (page 20) and Strategic Objective 3 (page 23). Over the past year, MoES has also been piloting mobile digital data collection during national school inspection in 46 out of 122 districts in Uganda, and data will be shared at national and potentially district level. For rural communities with limited electricity or IT infrastructure this is proving highly challenging. Moreover, the reports do not include the 'rich' qualitative data which is key in facilitating evidence-based decision-making and learning outcomes.

We have already provided technical assistance to develop and refine the indicators and tools used for school inspection, and we are keen to further support MoES to simplify the complex processes and increase their effectiveness. However, more investment is needed to transform the current system into a cohesive and effective national model, and find a way forward for the effective roll-out of digital data collection, creating a true step-change in the national accountability of government, educators and communities around education quality.

⁴ Education Policy Data Centre, Uganda National Profile 2014

⁵ <http://www.uwezo.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/UwezoUganda2015ALAREport-FINAL-EN-web.pdf>

⁶ UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, 2017/18, p.56

⁷ What Works for Social Accountability? Findings from DFID's macro evaluation, Policy Briefing, June 2017

⁸ See footnote 8

⁹ Ministry of Education and Sports Education and Sports Sector Strategic Plan, 2017/18 – 2019/20, September 2017

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience working with the Ministry of Education and Sport in Uganda
 - Experience working with Donor Partners, INGOs and NGOs
 - Master's degree in international development, education and/or any other related area
 - Minimum of 5 years' experience working in international development and education
 - Excellent oral and written English
 - A proven track record of professionalism and ethical conduct
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APPLICATION NOTES

- Please send a cover letter, CV and equal opportunities monitoring form to Samantha Ross at samantha@lcd.org.uk with the subject line "Scoping Study Consultant Application"
 - Your cover letter should detail how you meet the required criteria
 - It should also include your available start date
 - The Equal Opportunities form is available here: <http://www.lcdinternational.org/jobs-volunteering>
 - The closing date for applications is **5pm on the 15th of January 2018**
 - Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted
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