

## Terms of Reference: Endline study and final evaluation Girls' Access to Education: Girls' Education Challenge (GATE-GEC) implemented by Plan International UK

Plan International UK is seeking proposals from relevant parties to take on the role of External Evaluator for the Endline Evaluation of Girls' Access to Education-Girls' Education Challenge (GATE-GEC) in Sierra Leone, in line with the below Terms of Reference.

### 1. Background to Girls' Education Challenge (GEC)

- The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) was launched by the UK's then Department for International Development in 2012 as a 12-year year commitment to reach the most marginalised girls in the world and is the largest global fund dedicated to girls' education. The UK is committed to ensuring millions of girls in some of the poorest countries, including girls who have disabilities or are at risk of being left behind, receive a quality education.
- The first phase of the GEC (2012 - 2017) directly provided quality education for over a million marginalised girls. The GEC is now in its second phase (2017-2025), with up to 41 projects in 17 countries. The second phase is enabling existing GEC beneficiary girls to complete primary school, transition to secondary education, and progress on to technical vocational training or employment. Within the second phase, a second cohort of girls are also being supported through the Leave No Girl Behind funding window, which consists of interventions for highly marginalised, adolescent girls who are out of school - either because they have never attended school or have dropped out without gaining a basic education.<sup>1</sup>
- Globally 31 million primary age girls have never been to school<sup>2</sup>. The majority of these girls come from the poorest and most marginalised communities in the most disadvantaged locations, ethnic groups etc.<sup>3</sup> Over the last 20 years primary enrolments for girls have improved along with boys but completion rates are equally low for both sexes. At the secondary level the differences between boys' and girls' participation rates really start to show. Significant disparities exist within countries, with the poorest girls from rural areas most severely subject to educational disadvantage - even at the primary level<sup>4</sup>.
- The GEC is helping the world's poorest girls improve their lives through education and supporting better ways of getting girls in school and ensuring they receive a quality of education to transform their future.
- The GEC comprises a diverse set of projects that aim to promote sustainable approaches to learning and transition for marginalised girls, in a wide range of countries and contexts. It is one of the most significant sources of data and expertise in girls' education in a single programme globally and offers a significant opportunities for understanding what works and how to structure and design education projects for marginalised girls in the most challenging and poorest countries.
- The Girls' Education Challenge is managed on behalf of the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) by PwC and Cambridge Education, in alliance with Social Development Direct, Nathan Associates and Shan Globe and is collectively referred to as the Fund Manager (FM). The FM manages the relationships with the selected projects and provides guidance to support their Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning operations.
- Plan International UK is the lead organisation for this GEC project, Girls Access To Education – Girls Education Challenge (GATE-GEC). Plan International UK strive to advance children's

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<sup>1</sup> <https://girlseducationchallenge.org/#/>

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, 2015. *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics*. New York: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division. Sales No. E.15.XVII.8.

<sup>3</sup> Idem

<sup>4</sup> Idem

rights and equality for girls all over the world. As an independent development and humanitarian organisation, we work alongside children, young people, our supporters and partners to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood and enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. For over 80 years, we have been building powerful partnerships for children, and we are active in over 75 countries.

- Plan International UK lead on implementing the GATE-GEC project, in partnership with ActionAid, Humanity and Inclusion (formerly Handicap International) and The Open University; and in close collaboration with Sierra Leone's Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE). The project runs for four years from April 2017-July 2021
- Plan International UK also leads on two other GEC projects in Ghana and Zimbabwe

## 2. Project background / context

GEC1, the first phase of the GATE-GEC project, ran from 2013-2017 where the project was supporting Primary Schools (PS) and Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in five districts in Sierra Leone: Kailahun, Kenema, Kono, Moyamba, and Port Loko, targeting marginalised girls and children with disabilities. In its initial design, the project ran for 18 months with selected interventions at the school, community, and system levels, including interventions such as after school study groups, rehabilitating schools to become more disability-friendly and training teachers on inclusive education. The core themes of GEC1 included enabling girls to stay in school and complete basic education, strengthening learning and providing a safe and secure learning environment. However, with the outbreak of the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone in 2014 and the subsequent year-long school closures, the project adapted the approach to an "Education in Ebola" response with significantly adapted activities.

GEC-T (GEC-Transition) is the second and current phase of the GATE-GEC project and runs from 2017-2021. Still a UK Aid-funded project, GATE-GEC aims to continue supporting marginalised girls and children with disabilities across approximately 430 schools in six districts - Kailahun, Kono, Kenema, Port Loko, Karene and Moyamba – to attend school, reach their full learning potential, learn in a safe and inclusive school environment and successfully transition to further education and beyond. The project aims to achieve three high-level outcomes, specific to improving learning outcomes, transitioning from one year to the next and sustainability. The project works through a range of activities at the individual, school, home, community and governance levels to ensure sustainable support for education in Sierra Leone for the most marginalised children.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GATE-GEC has had to redesign the project to address the immediate education, health and well-being needs among girls and other marginalised groups. Our approach responds to a need for a rapid response to the access, retention and safeguarding issues now faced by marginalised girls and children with disabilities in Sierra Leone. Our revised strategy is comprised of three activity strands that include Teaching and Learning, Access and Retention and Psychosocial Support Interventions. The three strands of activity work together to ensure girls and children with disabilities are supported to safely return and stay in school amid the COVID-19 crisis. The approach works at a national, regional and local level to support the ongoing educational development, health and wellbeing of girls and children with disabilities within school and community contexts.

## 3. Theory of change

The project aims to support marginalised girls and children with disabilities to attend school, reach their full learning potential, learn in a safe and inclusive environment, and successfully transition to further education and beyond.

The project's original Theory of Change (ToC) focused on learning, transition and sustainability outcomes. The three primary outcomes were supported by five intermediate outcomes<sup>5</sup> and four outputs<sup>6</sup>. Learning outcomes were described as the improvement in literacy and numeracy scores of both PS and JSS students. There were six successful transition options in this project. Students were considered to have transitioned successfully if they: progress from one grade to another in school; transition from PS to JSS; transition from JSS to Senior Secondary School (SSS); repeat a grade; enrol in alternative education programmes; or engage in formal employment (above a certain age). Finally, sustainability focused on the extent to which project activities and norms were embedded at the school, community and system levels. For the project's original Theory of Change, see Annex 1.

Since COVID-19, the Theory of Change has been adapted to reflect the changing situation and to incorporate the adapted activities. The outcomes of learning, transition and sustainability remain; but how this is captured and what success looks like in the context of the pandemic differ in relation to the previous evaluation points. Additionally, how we believe this change will occur has altered in line with the changing context and our subsequent change in activities. Our current activities focus on connection to and continuation of teaching and learning, returning to school, wellbeing and resilience, social protection and safety and continued advocacy for investment in girls' education.

The project's four outputs are:

- Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are provided support to enable the transition back into education. *This involves social protection interventions and supporting the return to school.*
- Educators receive materials, training, Continuous Professional Development (CPD), coaching and supportive supervision to equip them in providing quality learning support to girls and children with disabilities
- Girls are able to learn in a safer and more supportive environment; while communities are engaged and mobilized to offer a more supportive and protective environment for girls. *This includes the provision of female-only after school clubs, dialogue with parents around girls' safety and education, and the provision of MHPSS support.*
- Project evidence and learning is shared with key decision makers and actors to influence the Sierra Leonean and wider Education sector; and promote opportunities for marginalised learners and girls

It is expected that fulfilling these outputs will lead to the intermediate outcomes of:

- Targeted marginalised girls and children with disabilities return to school and regularly attend school classes
- Teachers/schools provide effective teaching practices and differentiated learning support to marginalised learners
- Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are safer and more supported by their schools and communities

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<sup>5</sup> These are: Inclusive education, Self-esteem and confidence, Economic empowerment and Community attitudes

<sup>6</sup> The four project outputs aim to: Support marginalised girls and children with disabilities, and their parents/caregivers, are to attend school, learn and transition. This support includes participation in study groups, assistive devices for CWD, participation in Village Saving and Loan Associations (VLSA), Community Based Rehab Volunteer (CBRV) activities, and actions of School Management Committees (SMC) and Boards of Governors (BoG); Increase the number of skilled Programme Volunteers, Learning Assistants, and Student Teachers; Support marginalised girls and children with disabilities to learn in a safe and inclusive learning environment, through child protection scorecarding and other feedback mechanisms, and subsequent action plans; Share programme evidence and learning with decision makers in the Sierra Leonean education sector, through joint monitoring visits, training and consortium.

- Consistent level of shared learning, collaboration, influence and advocacy around inclusive, gender responsive education policies

Please refer to Annex 4 for the revised Theory of Change.

#### 4. Project approach in more detail

Before the onset of COVID-19, the original project interventions included activities such as after-school study groups in literacy and numeracy facilitated by Project Volunteers (teachers working in GATE-GEC schools who are supported by the project); capacity development of teaching staff on literacy and numeracy, inclusive education and gender-responsive pedagogies; training School Management Committees and Boards of Governors; supporting GEC communities in setting up and operating Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) to support the most vulnerable households; the provision of assistive devices for children with disabilities; engaging Itinerant Teachers who specialise in inclusive education and provide individualised learning support to children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties; accessible school adaptations (known as ‘model schools’); a score-carding accountability mechanism; and supporting three cohorts of women to become qualified teachers in rural communities where there are shortages of female teachers, in collaboration with three Teacher Training Colleges (TTC).

Project interventions were paused after Sierra Leone recorded its first case of COVID-19 on 31 March 2020. Sierra Leone closed schools at the end of March 2020 to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to protect school populations. School closures have disrupted the education of more than 2.6 million children<sup>7</sup>, with adverse impacts on the protection and wellbeing of children as well as their readiness for school, attendance and participation in learning. MBBSE, through the Education Emergency Task Force pillars of Communication, Continuous Distance Learning, School Reopening Readiness and Operations, Planning and Policy (of which GATE-GEC supports the first three pillars), developed initiatives to continue providing education through radio lessons and distribution of printed materials for children who sat for exams in the summer of 2020. GATE-GEC is working with the Education Emergency Taskforce to advise and support the government on activities during and post-COVID-19, focusing primarily on improving learning outcomes for children in Sierra Leone. Technical activities of the Taskforce have been rolled out, including the acceleration of remote learning and comprehensive sexuality education through radio and digital platforms. However, due to a Ministry directive, face-to-face learning activities have not been permitted during the period of school closures and the project’s focus has been on supporting MBSSE in providing distance learning opportunities for the most marginalized children.

At the onset of COVID-19, to ensure the immediate needs of project beneficiaries and key stakeholders were met, GATE-GEC developed an initial short-term response plan that included support to remote learning and sensitisation activities. This can be found in Annex 5. Key activities of the short-term response plan included:

- Rapid Education and Gender Analysis **Needs Assessment**
- **Support to remote learning** which included purchase and distribution of radios for children, project volunteers, Student Teachers (STs) and Head Teachers (HTs), airing of MBSSE radio programming within several districts, provision of learning supplies and community sensitisation on the importance of distance learning radio programming
- **Sensitisation activities with community stakeholders, parents and children** on COVID-19, child protection (CP), Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). Activities included distribution of Information,

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<sup>7</sup> UNICEF Sierra Leone, COVID-19 Situation Report - #4, 17-31 May 2020

Education and Communication (IEC) material; airing of radio messaging on COVID-19, CP, GBV; training for project staff, volunteers and school/community stakeholders on prevention and control of COVID-19 in schools and community, prevention and response to child protection issues and GBV, psychological first aid basic skills; provision of grants to Disabled People Organizations (DPOs); and the provision of handwashing stations and face masks to individuals, schools and communities.

Following this, the project shifted its approach for the Medium-Long Term Response Plan (MTRP) which covers the remainder of the project timeline (September 2020 - July 2021) to respond to emerging needs and priorities of GEC girls, their communities, and the education systems to which they belong. A brief summary of the activities under the MTRP is as follows, further information can be found in Annex 6:

- **Provide support to enable girls' transition back into education:** The project aims to prioritise a COVID-19 School Access and Retention Strategy which includes a school and community mobilisation programme, sensitisation on return to school, COVID-19 safety, GBV, and protection/safeguarding; and through social protection interventions such as bursaries, food distributions, dignity kits, and support to VSLAs to mitigate against physical and resource-based barriers to education.
- **Distance learning opportunities and teacher support:** Distance learning will be supported through the engagement of female Student Teachers (STs) working to build a dialogue via telephone communication with our beneficiaries across PS and JSS, addressing school return fears, reengaging students in learning and providing 'bite size' learning activity for those who are yet to return to school. We are producing revised curriculum specific Literacy and Numeracy resources for application during the resumed study groups should face-to-face contact be allowed to resume, or for distance learning should schools reclose. The learning materials are also designed to support in-school pedagogy, homeworking and self-led study during 'normal' periods of school delivery. Staff training will be conducted to embed the distance learning/home working interventions across the intervention schools. Further training on GESI will help to unpack and address teachers' attitudes, and training on gender-responsive and inclusive pedagogy will aim to support and equip teachers to identify and respond to inequalities in the classroom and differentiate their approaches for the needs of different learners.
- **Safer and more supportive school environments:** The project will support and train STs to provide female-only after school Girls' Clubs for girls in Primary Schools. Through these clubs, girls will have opportunities to explore and discuss key issues, including self-esteem, assertive communication, SRHR, GBV, and help to build awareness of their rights and access to support. Girls will also have access to a trusted female mentor, trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA)/Psychosocial Support (PSS) and able to support girls in need to access relevant services. Additional efforts to improve safety within the school environment involve whole-school training on safeguarding, GESI, and the Code of Conduct; strengthening in-school reporting mechanisms to make these more child-centred and accessible; and strengthening referral pathways/links between schools and protection services.
- **Supportive and protective community environments:** To support safe and protective communities, GATE-GEC will continue its community mobilisation interventions and the printing of communication materials and broadcast of media content. Through consortium partner Humanity and Inclusion (HI), 141 Community-Based Rehabilitation Volunteers (CBRVs) are integrating COVID-19 and GBV into their messaging package. Through consortium partner Action Aid, Village Agents (VAs) are being mobilised and supported to engage their VSLA groups in reflective dialogues around issues related to positive parenting; gender and power dynamics within the home, including the distribution of household labour; adolescent SRHR; and GBV. HI will identify, train and support a cadre of community

based MHPSS volunteers to provide immediate support and to signpost and build links to formal MHPSS services.

- **Support the sharing of evidence and learning to advocate and influence education stakeholders and Ministries:** The project will continue the coordination with the MBSSE through the Education Emergency Taskforce in the relevant working groups. The project will additionally engage the Ministry through quarterly national Steering Committees meetings and through Joint Monitoring Visits. The project continues to collaborate with NGOs working in education (Mott MacDonald's Leh We Lan and GLADI, IRC's EAGER project), the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) and other relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment and sustainability of project interventions

The project interventions are more clearly detailed in the annexes. The Endline Evaluation will be expected to collect data and speak to the contribution of activities highlighted in the research questions noted in Section 7.

## 5. Project beneficiaries

GATE-GEC works with marginalised girls and children with disabilities in Primary Schools (P1-P6) and Junior Secondary Schools (JSS1-JSS3). The original design of the project was to follow the same cohort of girls and children with disabilities until these children transition to Senior Secondary School, or another form of learning or employment. The GATE-GEC Baseline Evaluation sets out the original demographic characteristics for the project beneficiaries. The Midline Evaluation reflects the project's beneficiary engagement between 2017-2019. See Annexes 8 and 9 for Baseline and Midline Evaluation Reports.

GATE-GEC seeks to include both girls and boys with disabilities in the Endline Evaluation, although the focus should be on girls. Although the project also works with boys with disabilities who likely also face intersectional marginalisation, due to funder reporting requirements, boys with disabilities are considered secondary beneficiaries of the project. The current GATE-GEC key sub-groups include girls with disabilities; primary school girls; orphans; married girls; young mothers and those in poorer households. In response to changing parameters of marginalisation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project is expanding the cohort by significantly increasing the number of beneficiaries it supports. At the start of the academic year 2019, the project supported 2,277 girls and children with disabilities; the expected number for this academic year is 8,000 girls and children with disabilities. The project is undertaking a demographic analysis of this increased number of direct beneficiaries, and so further sub-group categories may be added and will be provided to the successful Evaluation Partner.

The project's intent has always been to recognise and support the individual barriers of marginalisation which girls and children with disabilities encounter in their educational, familial and social settings. The project recognises the intersectional nature of disadvantage relating to disability, race and ethnicity, gender and socio-economic position. The Endline Evaluation will need to reflect the tracing of beneficiary experiences, considering issues of intersectionality and how the project has responded to beneficiary development and need. The Evaluation will identify commonalities of experience of project beneficiaries, while also presenting nuanced, qualitative depictions of the unique experiences of individuals engaged in the project (for reference to specific numbers of beneficiaries and specific sub-groups, please see Annexes 8 and 9 to the Baseline and Midline documents; along with the MTRP (Annex 6) to reflect the new expected beneficiary numbers).

The project's Midline Evaluation and ongoing monitoring and research data will support the External Evaluator in their understanding of how the profiles of beneficiaries have evolved and the project's

design has changed to support beneficiaries' needs. For example, the Midline Evaluation Report highlighted concerns over the educational performance and wellbeing of girls with disabilities in primary intervention school settings. The recent project re-design has specifically responded to this and other findings through adaptive programming.

As outlined above, the project has undergone a re-design in response to the midline findings and subsequently to the fast-emerging COVID-19 context. For the Endline Evaluation, we need to explore how the multiplicity of our interventions in education, safeguarding, psychosocial support, financial and bursary assistance come together to impact upon the beneficiary experience in the areas of learning, transition and sustainability.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and the project re-design, GATE-GEC focused on two key transition points: P6 to JSS and JSS to SSS. Due to the disruption of COVID-19 on beneficiaries' education, the Endline Evaluation will no longer be considering transition as above but will be considering how the project has impacted on beneficiaries in relation to their commitment to continuing their education after the project timeframe. The project is undertaking data capture and analysis to identify which of our current beneficiaries have returned to school since 5 October 2020 (when schools reopened), which of our beneficiaries require additional support to return to school and which of our beneficiaries are unable to return to school and may require support outside of the school context. This information will be shared with the successful Evaluation Partner.

In addition to primary and secondary project beneficiaries, the project also works with a range of stakeholders who are directly and indirectly supported by the project including:

- Student Teachers
- Programme Volunteers
- Community Based Rehabilitation Volunteers
- Itinerant Teachers
- Head Teachers
- School committees referred to as *School Management Committees* and *Boards of Governors*
- Parents and caregivers
- VSLA members
- District and National Ministerial Departments in Sierra Leone

## 6. Purpose/Objectives of the evaluation

The project is seeking to procure the services of an independent External Evaluator to conduct a mixed-methods, gender-sensitive Endline study and final evaluation of the project that is inclusive of persons with disabilities. The Evaluation Team will provide an independent, rigorous evaluation and research function; however, the methodology and evaluation frameworks used to assess the delivery, effectiveness and impact of the project will be designed in consultation and thought partnership with the Project Team, and in consultation with the Fund Manager.

The evaluation will provide a clear picture of the issues affecting the current cohort of girls' and children with disabilities' education in the six districts and identify recommendations for strengthening and sustaining positive outcomes. The evaluation should explore the reasons why change occurs in relation to the current cohort of girls' and children with disabilities', as well as the impact of the project on other key stakeholders. The evaluation should identify key learning to inform future policy and programming, specifically recognising the impact of national school closures on educational development, physical, social and emotional safety and wellbeing and the approach the project has taken to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the beneficiaries.



The Evaluation Team will be expected to bring a creative and innovative approach to the assignment, actively involving beneficiaries and communities in the work and employing in-depth qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a rich description of outcomes for GATE-GEC beneficiaries.

The objectives of the evaluation are:

- To provide a robust measurement of the project's results against the intended intermediate outcomes and outcomes, in particular learning and transition
- To understand the drivers, enablers and barriers to the learning and successful transition of marginalised girls and specific sub-groups targeted by the project
- To understand the impact of COVID-19, and particularly school closures, on marginalised girls' outcomes and specific sub-groups
- To understand how and how well the project adapted their design and implementation of activities in light of COVID-19, and particularly school closures, and the degree to which these activities achieved their desired effects
- To understand how and how well the project included and supported marginalised/vulnerable groups, including children living with disability, (specifically, capture changes in safeguarding, inclusion and gender-sensitive practices) and has contributed to increasing equality and equity between boys and girls, men and women
- To describe and assess the lasting impact that project has had and will have (or can reasonably be expected to have) at the level of individuals, schools, communities and also systemically
- To draw lessons from the process, design, implementation, successes and failures of the project and support with the dissemination of evaluation findings and lessons from the project

The findings from the evaluation will primarily be used:

- by the project management team, project consortium partners and stakeholders to understand the impact of the project during its lifetime;
- by the project management team to leverage additional resources from existing and new partners and stakeholders to scale-up and sustain the activities /benefits delivered by the project;
- by the community, partners and the Government to inform their own support to beneficiaries and to support systemic change;
- to share learning and recommendations with the communities, schools and beneficiaries with whom the project works and ensure meaningful accountability to these stakeholder groups;
- to demonstrate accountability for the funding received to FCDO, other UK Government Departments, UK tax-payers, UK media;
- by the Fund Manager to feed into and identify insights in order to inform programme level questions; and
- by other donors, academic institutions and education networks to inform the wider policy debates concerning the education and successful transition of marginalised girls.

## 7. Evaluation questions



The evaluation should include findings and recommendations based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria<sup>8</sup> listed below. The evaluation questions have been set collaboratively by the project and the GEC Fund Manager, but there will be an opportunity for them to be further refined during the inception phase of the evaluation. Where the questions do not define a time period specific to Covid-19, the questions apply to the period from the Midline Evaluation onwards (i.e. November 2019 onwards). Within the questions below, girls and children with disabilities are inclusive of all priority sub-groups, as defined in the Section 5 of this document. Therefore, the evaluator is required to evaluate the experiences, and present findings, in relation to the defined priority sub-groups within the project.

Evaluation criteria	Main evaluation questions and sub-questions
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent were the objectives and design of the project, including the underlying theory of change, valid and did they respond to the needs, priorities and policies of intended beneficiaries, partner organisations (e.g. schools) and the country?</li> <li>• To what extent did they remain responsive to the needs, priorities and policies of these groups when circumstances changed?</li> </ul> <p>Sub-questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How appropriate was the project’s response to the effects of the pandemic on retention and dropout of girls and children with disabilities? For those at most risk of drop out (considering key vulnerabilities as they relate to beneficiary sub-group definitions). How did the project not address the barriers they face in school return/initial school access, what were the challenges, and what recommendations would the Evaluation Team make to address these for future in-country access and retention strategies?</li> <li>• Was there a way to make better use of resources and training materials for teaching and learning, psychosocial support, safeguarding and wellbeing, for girls and children with disabilities, and how could any future materials and their contextual training be improved for future in-country interventions?</li> <li>• How have the beneficiaries changed across the life of the project, and how have the interventions remained relevant to beneficiaries needs?</li> <li>• How have school closures affected the wellbeing of girls and children with disabilities, and how has the project responded appropriately and correctly to this?</li> </ul>
Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent was the project consistent with and complementary to other interventions and policies? Where relevant, to what extent did the project adapt to changes in the policy environment?</li> </ul> <p>Sub-questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the project responded to the school-wide closures and worked with the Ministerial departments and relevant stakeholders to support return to school and retention of girls and children with disabilities during the Covid-19 project response?</li> <li>• To what extent has the project been framed within national educational priorities and policies during the Covid-19 pandemic?</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the project contributed to key MBSSE strategies and initiatives?</li> <li>• How far have the projects Covid-19 interventions worked within schools and community level systems and structures to strengthen safeguarding mechanisms, including reporting, monitoring and referral processes?</li> </ul>
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was the project managed efficiently? To what extent did the project adopt and apply 'adaptive management' practices?</li> </ul> <p>Sub questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were the training materials and staff training in psychosocial support, safeguarding and wellbeing, efficiently delivered within the Covid-19 project interventions?</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent were the objectives and intended results of the project achieved, including differential results across groups?</li> <li>• What were the major factors influencing the achievement on non-achievement of the objectives and intended results?</li> </ul> <p>Sub questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering the multiplicity of individual beneficiaries educational, social, physical, financial and familial contributory factors, in accessing distance learning and in-school interventions during the Covid-19 project response; how effective has the project's approach to educational improvements in literacy and numeracy been on girls and children with disabilities (differentiated by subgroup)?</li> <li>• How successfully has the project supported and prepared girls, children with disabilities, communities and teachers for the safe reopening of schools during the Covid-19 project response?</li> <li>• How effective were the distance learning interventions and materials to support girls' and children with disabilities' in re-engaging in learning during the Covid-19 pandemic?</li> <li>• How effectively has the project engaged parents/caregivers and the wider community in its Covid-19 school return and retention interventions?</li> <li>• How effective are the project's processes for identifying, reporting and responding to potential safeguarding concerns? Has the project ensured that beneficiaries do not feel at risk of harm as a result of their involvement in the Covid-19 project interventions?</li> <li>• How effectively have social protection interventions such as bursary items, food assistance, dignity kits, grants to VSLA groups and assistive devices supported girls and children with disabilities to attend and stay in school? What challenges or barriers remain for these children to engage in learning?</li> <li>• To what extent have psychosocial interventions by the project been effective in promoting resilience?</li> <li>• How effectively did the programme learn from the Midline Evaluation findings specific to Teaching and Learning; and respond to these findings to inform the programme redesign required for the Covid-19 response?</li> </ul>
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent did the project generate or contribute to the generation of significant higher-level effects (social, environmental and economic), whether positive or negative, intended or unintended?</li> </ul> <p>Sub-questions:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Across the direct beneficiary cohort for the GATE-GEC Covid-19 project interventions, how has the project impacted positively or negatively on girls and children with disabilities (differentiated by subgroups) in relation to their commitment to continue their education after the end of the project timeframe?</li> <li>• How has the project impacted on Student Teachers in relation to their commitment to teaching after the end of the project timeframe? What has been the impact on the newly qualified female STs as a result of being further engaged in project activities?</li> <li>• What impact has the project’s promotion of gender-sensitive, inclusive and child-centred pedagogical approaches (pre and post the Covid-19 project adaptations) had on girls and children with disabilities’ learning and on wider teaching practices within GATE-GEC intervention schools?</li> <li>• What has been the impact at school level from the presence of female student teachers (according to the Head Teachers, other school staff, and beneficiaries)? What has been the impact on primary girls as a result of female student teacher’s facilitation of Girls’ Clubs?</li> </ul>
Sustainability <sup>9</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent will the net benefits (whether financial, economic, social and/or environmental) of the project continue?</li> <li>• To what extent was the project successful in building sustainability within the enabling environment for change at the family, community, school and system levels?</li> <li>• What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability?</li> </ul> <p>Sub-questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the projects Covid-19 response distance learning interventions provided a sustainable model for future school closure distance learning, or to support a sustainable approach to home learning during periods of 'normal' school delivery<sup>10</sup>?</li> <li>• Has the projects pre and post Covid-19 response study group model, in PS and JSS, had sustainable impact upon the professional development and teaching practices of the project's educational facilitators and Head Teachers in intervention schools? Has there been any cascading of project pedagogic approaches and teaching and learning materials across the school's wider educational community?</li> <li>• In what ways have the government, education-sector and key stakeholder partnerships informed and contributed to sustainability of the project interventions?</li> <li>• To what extent has the project integrated gender-transformative approaches, and how has this influenced behaviours and attitudes in schools and communities? What is the likelihood that changes in attitudes and behaviours relating to gender equity will be sustained beyond project end?</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Sustainability in the GEC is about delivering and enabling long lasting girls’ empowerment through education, for current and future generations, by working with girls, families, communities, schools and systems. For each project, sustainable change and impact should be embedded in the Theory of Change. Sustainability can be built at the individual girl level, and also within the enabling environment for change, including at community, family, school and system levels.

<sup>10</sup> To note, the interventions are specific to the acquisition of key concepts in literacy and numeracy for children requiring additional remedial support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways has the project’s approach to ‘Girls’ Clubs’ in PS led to sustainable approaches within the intervention school of meeting the wellbeing needs of girls and children with disabilities?</li> </ul>
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## 8. Scope of work, methodology and approach

Plan International is seeking proposals which involve a mixed-methods gender sensitive and socially inclusive design, incorporating in-depth and innovative qualitative methods with participatory child-centred approaches. At inception phase, the Evaluation Team will work with the Project Team at Plan International and with the Fund Manager to establish a shared set of priorities and approaches.

At previous evaluation points, a difference-in-difference approach (DID) was used to calculate the changes in outcomes of interest. Due to ethical considerations relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Endline Evaluation will not be required to employ this approach and it will not involve the assessment of a comparison group.

Due to the complex and changing environment of school closures and access to communities as a result of Covid-19 in Sierra Leone, Plan International UK is looking to recruit an Endline Evaluator to design an appropriate and innovative Endline Evaluation for GATE-GEC. Due to the change in focus of the project and limited data collection opportunities (or possible restrictions on data collection), applicants may want to consider non-experimental approaches to evaluating the project impact. Evaluators should propose methodologies that can adequately demonstrate the project’s interventions contributions to outcomes for beneficiaries, and that acknowledge the ground-realities of data collection.

The Endline Evaluation should plan to work across all six districts with the target group including both marginalised girls and children with disabilities, as well as other key stakeholders including Student Teachers, VSLA members, Head Teachers, Boards of Governors, School Management Committees, Programme Volunteers, CBRVs, Itinerant Teachers, parents, project staff and Ministry staff/other stakeholders of interest.

Bidders are invited to take note of the following when outlining their proposed evaluation approach:

**Qualitative research:** Qualitative data is a crucial element of the evaluation and is expected to provide insights into why and how change has happened. We will expect the Evaluation Team to articulate a detailed qualitative methodology in their proposal, including how qualitative data will be fully integrated into the analysis. The Evaluation Team will be expected to demonstrate a creative approach to qualitative inquiry, integrating innovative and participatory data collection methods which amplify the voices of beneficiaries. The size and composition of the qualitative sample should be explicitly informed by how the Evaluation Team intends to analyse the qualitative data, and the Evaluation Team should set out a clear coding plan (whether using software such as NVivo or manually) through which it will explore themes, patterns and contradictions.

**Using existing MEL data:** The Evaluation Team will need to consider how they extract data relevant to answering the research questions from the data already captured across the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) tools. The project’s MEL approach applies longitudinal data capture to an existing group of project beneficiaries. However, in reference to Section 5 above, the direct beneficiary cohort has grown significantly this year and the project has devised a number of new MEL tools to define project progress. The Evaluation Team will be expected to draw on existing

project monitoring (which will be made available) to inform the Endline Evaluation and should outline a broad approach to doing so in their submission. The project will work with the successful Evaluation Partner to identify any new methods of data capture required.

**Measuring learning:** Learning remains a core outcome of the GATE-GEC project and a central focus of the evaluation. However, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Evaluation Team is not expected to assess learning outcomes by administering learning assessments such as the EGRA and EGMA, to a statistically significant sample of girls. The Endline Evaluation will not involve assessing the learning of a comparison group, as has been the case with the Midline Evaluations across the GEC portfolio to date. The project is working with The Open University on distance learning and revisions to its in-school educational facilitation in response to the pandemic, exploring new pedagogic approaches, teacher training and learning materials. The Evaluation Team will need to explore alternative approaches to demonstrating the project's impacts upon learners within a distance learning model and throughout a period of fragmented educational facilitation. We expect this to involve qualitative case study approaches designed to capture individuals' contextual drivers and subsequent educational developments across the project's subgroups.

**Target beneficiaries:** Section 5 outlines the current beneficiaries and sub-groups of interest and as noted, data capture is ongoing by the project to define the expanded beneficiary cohort, which will be shared with the successful Evaluation Partner. Beneficiaries are tracked through a unique beneficiary ID (scannable ID cards with QR codes) and can be reached through mobile numbers or via community networks. It should be noted the length and level of participation varies by beneficiaries, however the new MTRP activities only commenced in September 2020. The length of exposure to the activities should be considered in the Evaluation Team's submission.

**Flexibility of approach:** Plan International recognises the scope and methodology of the evaluation may be affected by the current COVID-19 pandemic and associated impacts. The successful Evaluation Partner will be expected to demonstrate flexibility and creativity, and demonstrated capacity to do so, in responding to the changing situation applying appropriate methods of data capture. As part of their proposal, applicants should demonstrate they have considered possible scenarios relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and how these might affect the evaluation design e.g. the implications of prolonged or repeated school closures, travel restrictions and physical distancing rules. They should outline how they would adapt their approach to take these into account, ensuring the safety of all participants remains paramount.

**Integrating gender-sensitive and participatory methods for working with girls and children with disabilities:** The Evaluation Team should integrate methods tailored to working with girls and children with disabilities, including creative and participatory ways to engage beneficiaries in the process of gathering and interpreting data. The design and implementation of the Endline Evaluation must adhere to Plan International's Child-Centred Community Development Standards (Annex 10). Furthermore, the evaluation must be conducted in line with Plan International's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, internal guidelines on child protection and ethical standards in monitoring, evaluation and learning. Before work can start, the Evaluation Team will be required to understand, comply with and sign Plan International's Global Policy on Safeguarding Children and Young People (Annex 11). This will involve an induction to Plan International's policies with Plan International UK's Safeguarding and Protection Mainstreaming Technical Adviser. Within the proposal, the Evaluation Team will need to clearly outline their approach to managing and reporting suspected or actual cases of abuse,

**Quality of work:** The quality of all work undertaken as part of this assignment will be assessed against Bond's Evidence Principles and Checklist (Annex 12). All aspects of the evaluation will be

expected to meet at least a 'Good' standard of evidence, according to the definitions stated. The Evaluation Team will be expected to demonstrate how they intend to incorporate these principles<sup>11</sup> to the required standard throughout the Endline process, from inception to analysis and final reporting; we will encourage the Evaluation Team to refer to these in their response to these Terms of Reference.

**Responsibility of the project:**

1. To provide the project proposal, logframe, Theory of Change, MEL Framework and other relevant documents;
2. Overview of the project, list of communities and schools per district; list of beneficiaries in each community disaggregated by grade and sex; lists of beneficiaries included in Midline Evaluation sample disaggregated by grade and sex;
3. Confirmation of approval for the evaluation from the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education;
4. Contact list of key people in-country and in the field;
5. Support identifying suitable local enumerators;
6. Support in setting up introductory meetings with relevant stakeholders and communities;
7. Data collection logistics support and constraints (school timings, holidays, testing schedules, access to respondent groups, etc.), as required;
8. Collaborative workshops with Fund Manager and Evaluation Team to finalise evaluation questions and methodology;
9. Complete/update the sustainability plan and provide a written account of the project's achievements and/or progress towards the achievement of lasting impact.

**Responsibility of the External Evaluators:**

1. Submit a full list of contacts for all staff involved in the Evaluation Team during the inception meeting;
2. Describe the overall evaluation approach, drawing from the MEL framework, prior evaluation reports and available datasets;
3. Collaborate with the project and Fund Manager to agree on final evaluation questions for the Endline study;
4. Identify options for methodologies and possible tools for the agreed evaluation questions;
5. Design or modify tools where necessary, in consultation with the GATE-GEC Project MEL staff and secure Fund Manager approval for all data collection tools;
6. Report to the Evaluation Steering Committee and attend meetings as agreed with the Plan International UK MEL Specialist and MEL Officer;
7. Report any safeguarding or child protection concerns as soon as possible and within 24 hours to the Plan International Safeguarding Focal Points;<sup>12</sup>
8. Perform child protection and safeguarding background checks on all their staff involved in evaluation activities, including contractors;
9. Submit (by email) to the Plan International UK MEL Specialist weekly progress reports during the evaluation period, summarising activities / tasks completed to date (% achieved), challenges and mitigation strategies, time spent, etc.;
10. Run analysis of the findings and produce reports which sufficiently explore and explain the results;
11. Develop and agree on a reporting structure and format with the project and Fund Manager, including early presentations of emerging findings and produce any other relevant dissemination materials, and share findings with the GATE-GEC consortium;

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<sup>11</sup> The five Bond Evidence Principles are: Voice and Inclusion; Appropriateness; Triangulation; Contribution; and Transparency.

<sup>12</sup> Relevant contact details will be shared with the External Evaluator once appointed.

12. Review the project's sustainability plan and self-reporting of achievements and progress towards lasting impact, including through the collection of evidence to triangulate the project's claims;
13. Conduct a thorough desk review, including examining available data from prior evaluations and from monitoring, from other country-specific reports and activities to inform tools, analysis, reporting.

For fieldwork, please note these may not all be appropriate based on the context at the time of data collection:

14. Contact the Plan International UK MEL Specialist on a daily basis during the fieldwork stage of the evaluation;
15. Recruit and train research assistants such as enumerators for the assessment;
16. Make own logistical arrangements to reach the selected schools and / or communities and organise interviews and ensure full logistical support for the entire exercise across all districts;
17. Supervise and take full responsibility for the behaviour and performance of data collectors, including data collection checking in the field;
18. Ensure individual data collection reports outlining progress achieved and any challenges are completed by enumerators and that these are compiled into an overall data collection report

## 9. Country field visits

On 10 September 2020, the Government of Sierra Leone announced COVID-19 arrival and departure protocols which states one must obtain authorisation from the Government of Sierra Leone to travel. This authorisation is dependent on certain pre-requisites. At the time of publication (23 October 2020), Plan International UK is currently advising against all international travel. We therefore expect the Evaluation Team to work with an in-country partner who can access the communities we work with. The Evaluation Team must highlight in their approach how data collection will be undertaken within the following certain contexts: a) where all data collection is virtual (no in-person data collection is permitted) and b) where a combination of in-person data collection, virtual data collection and/or project data is used. We expect the Evaluation Team to clearly outline their responses to these scenarios and propose innovative data collection methods. We would expect the successful Evaluation Partner to demonstrate flexibility and creativity in adapting the evaluation approach as necessary to respond to existing circumstances, while ensuring that the evaluation fulfils the fundamental requirements of research questions and methodology requirements outlined above.

We also expect a proportion of work of the Evaluation Team will be extracting and analysing data collected via the project's existing monitoring and systems. The GATE-GEC project has been completing monitoring remotely and recently, in line with government restrictions, has resumed some face-to-face monitoring through our in-country field teams. The project uses an online platform called Kobo, which allows us to track data capture in real-time. GATE-GEC's remote monitoring has mainly consisted of telephone surveys with beneficiaries, parents/caregivers and other stakeholders. As travel was not restricted at the district level, GATE-GEC has mobilised our community networks, and PVs and CRBVs have assisted with data collection. GATE-GEC will share all monitoring tools and data with the successful Evaluation Partner; and will work with the Evaluation Team to adapt and revise tools to ensure they are fit for purpose to aid the Endline Evaluation.



## 10. Ethics and risk management

**Research ethics plan:** Bidders are required to set out their approach to ensuring complete compliance with international good practice relating to research ethics and protocols, particularly with regards to safeguarding children and vulnerable groups (including girls and people with disabilities). Consideration should be given to:

- Administrative, technical and physical safeguards to protect the confidentiality of those participating in research;
- Safeguards for those conducting research;
- Do No Harm safeguards for children participating in research, including child-safe physical safeguards as well as emotional/psychosocial safeguards;
- Appropriate time allocated to engage with children participating in the research;
- Parental or caregiver consent concerning data collection from children or collation of data about children;
- Age- and ability-appropriate assent processes based on reasonable assumptions about comprehension for the ages of children and the disabilities they intend to involve in the research;
- Appropriate spaces and methodologies tailored in consideration of unique needs of girls and boys, including those with disabilities and for vulnerable adults;
- Appropriate language and communication for different ages and the disabilities of children involved in the research.

Ethical approval will need to be secured from Plan International's Ethics Review Committee before data collection activities can commence. This will include the submission of complete research tools and protocols. Further information will be provided to the successful Evaluation Partner.

**Risk management plan:** It is important the successful Evaluation Partner has taken all reasonable measures to mitigate any potential risks to research participants and the delivery of the required outputs for this evaluation. Therefore, the Evaluation Team should submit a comprehensive risk management plan covering:

- The assumptions underpinning the successful completion of the proposals submitted and the anticipated challenges that might be faced;
- Estimates of the level of risk for each risk identified;
- Proposed contingency plans the bidder will put in place to mitigate any occurrence of each of the identified risks;
- Specific safeguarding risks (for both children and adults) and mitigating strategies, including reference to the child protection policy and procedures that will be in place;
- Health and safety issues that may require significant duty of care precautions, with particular consideration paid to risks relating to COVID-19.

## 11. Planning and deliverables

The deadline for proposals is **23 November 2020**. Questions can be asked of the GATE-GEC team during the planning process. It is expected a contractor will be selected on or before 18 December 2020.

The successful contractor will provide the following deliverables against the following suggested timeline (to be agreed in the inception phase):

Item	Description	Timeframe
1	Inception report	Drafts: January 2021

		Final: February 2021
2	Tools, mapping of tools and available data to evaluation questions and logframe, sampling frame	Drafts: February/March 2021 Final: February/March 2021
3	Fieldwork, including training of enumerators	March/April 2021
4	Presentation of emerging findings to [project] and GEC Fund Manager, proposed report outline submitted for feedback	April 2021
5	Evaluation report, including annexes (including those mandated by the GEC Fund Manager)	Drafts: May 2021 Final: June 2021
6	Publishable summary of evaluation findings (targeted primarily for an external, strategic stakeholder, such as a Minister or Permanent Secretary of the education ministry)	June 2021
7	Slide deck for presenting findings	June 2021
8	Presentation of findings to (1) FCDO, GEC FM and other GEC projects and (2) Ministry of Education in project country and other national and regional stakeholders	June/July 2021
9	Data sets, metadata and tools ready for submission to UK Data Archive	June/July 2021

The draft and final evaluation report should be no longer than 50 pages, excluding the executive summary and annexes. The report should indicatively be structured as follows:

- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Description of the project, including the Theory of Change
- Overview of the evaluation approach, the Endline methodology and methods used, including limitations and challenges (detailed methodology to be provided in annex)
- Findings
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Annexes

All reports should be submitted in electronic form and should be submitted in English.

In addition to the above:

1. Applicants are required to provide a **detailed workplan** incorporating all relevant tasks and milestones of the Endline Evaluation study, from start to finish; they are also required to include in their detailed workplans the milestones set out below (please note final dates will be confirmed once evaluators are recruited and initial discussions are scoped with the Evaluation Team).
2. The Evaluation Team will be required to deliver a face-to-face and/or online **presentation** of the evaluation findings, as an integral part of the submission process. An in-country presentation is desirable; however, an online interactive webinar may also be considered given the current context.
3. Other **communication materials** for dissemination are encouraged. The project is particularly interested in materials which will help us feed back to the beneficiaries and communities we work alongside, engaging stakeholders more widely. These will be agreed with the project team during the inception phase.
4. **Final Data Collection Tools** – The Evaluation Team and Plan International will work collaboratively on all methods of data capture for the Endline Evaluation. At the end of

the evaluation, the Evaluation Team will be expected to return these tools to Plan, including a clean copy of the all data collection tools developed and used in the study.

5. **Cleaned Data Set (including transcripts)** – The Evaluation Team will be expected to provide a fully ‘cleaned-up’ dataset for both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the evaluation. For quantitative reporting, this may be in SPSS, Stata or SAS file format accompanied by the code used to carry out analysis and a variable codebook. Similarly, for qualitative work, this should include cleaned and anonymised transcripts and coding framework.

## 12. Governance and tasks to be performed by Plan International UK and GEC Fund Manager

The following tasks will be performed by Plan International UK:

- Plan International UK will provide all relevant technical and financial documentation to the evaluator as required.
- Plan International UK will facilitate access to respondents.
- Plan International UK will appoint a contact person for the evaluation and will facilitate access to a contact person at the GEC Fund Manager.

The following tasks will be performed by the GEC Fund Manager:

- Discussion and approval of evaluation questions, methodology, tools and Endline report structure
- Participating in workshops to discuss Endline study (prior to inception report), discuss emerging findings, and sign off the final report
- The GEC Fund Manager will specify a minimum set of annexes required for the evaluation report, including a specification of tables required for the presentation of outcome data and the beneficiary profile.

The evaluation will be managed by Plan International UK. An advisory group, consisting of members of the GEC Fund Manager, Plan International UK, Plan International Sierra Leone and relevant GATE-GEC consortium partners will provide backstopping and quality assurance to the evaluation process. Annex B provides the process flow of the evaluation.

## 13. General guidelines, submission and selection criteria

A technical proposal and a financial proposal should be submitted in two separate PDF documents to [gategec@plan-uk.org](mailto:gategec@plan-uk.org) with the subject line “Confidential proposal for Endline study and final evaluation of GATE-GEC Sierra Leone”.

The deadline for proposals is **23 November 2020**. Questions can be asked throughout the pre-submission planning phase. Technical proposals should, as a minimum, include a section on:

- i. Background and contract management capacity of the evaluator
- ii. Understanding of the terms of reference
- iii. Proposed approach and methodology
- iv. Proposed methods and sampling
- v. Workplan including deliverables
- vi. Proposed team including roles and responsibilities and time-input allocation for each team members, as well as CVs of each member of the Evaluation Team (no more than 3 pages), detailing relevant skills and experience including any examples of published research

- vii. Quality Assurance plan that sets out the systems and processes for quality assuring the evaluation and research process and deliverables of the project from start to finish
- viii. Ethics and Child Safeguarding approaches: applicants are required to set out their approach to ensuring complete compliance with international good practice with regards to research ethics and protocols
- ix. Comprehensive Risk Management plan
- x. Relevant annexes that further substantiate the technical bid, including but not limited to:
  - a. Two examples of relevant previous work undertaken by the Evaluation Team (involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis);
  - b. References: Please provide two references who we may contact to discuss experiences of working with you

The currency of the financial proposal is GBP. Please assure that the technical proposal does not refer to any financial figures of the bid.

All eligible proposals will be assessed based on this Terms of Reference and awarded scores following objective technical criteria under four categories. The weighting for each criterion is given in brackets.

- A. Expertise of the firm or institution (15%)
  - Minimum of 10 years of experience in conducting programmatic evaluations in the development sector.
  - Strong experience in education, gender and international development programme evaluations.
  - Experience with UK AID is desirable.
- B. Proposed approach, methodology and workplan (30%)
  - The technical proposal should include and clearly articulate the approach, methodology and methods proposed for the evaluation.
  - The proposal should include a clear workplan with roles and responsibilities and allocation of days for different team members specified.
- C. Qualifications and experience of the Evaluation Team (35%)
  - All core team members should have at least an advanced university degree in education, international development or social sciences; or significant experience within the sector.
  - The team should have experience of:
    - The global discourse on SDGs, education 2030 agenda and girls' education.
    - Experience in evaluating programmes in the context of least developed country settings; the Evaluation Team should be able to demonstrate they have the appropriate language skills within their wider team to conduct the research required in the Sierra Leonean context.
    - Specialised thematic expertise on the subject matter evaluated, i.e. gender in education, quality in education, teacher development, safe learning environment, inclusive education.
    - Proficiency in English in the core team is mandatory. Proficiency in [national language(s) to be added by the project] in the wider team is an advantage.
    - Strong research capacity including rigorous quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis and data visualisation skills.
    - Conducting research with children using interactive, child-friendly and participatory methodologies.

- Conducting research with persons with disabilities, including children: experience with the Washington Group methodology would be particularly appreciated.
- Conducting gender-sensitive research methods and experience measuring changes in gender attitudes;
- Experience of alternative forms of impact assessment is desired
- Strong interactive presentation and workshop facilitation skills
- Strong English reporting skills
- Strong communication, inter-personal, people and team management skills to facilitate a smooth process of the evaluation.
- The team leader should have a minimum of 15 years of professional evaluation experience in programme/policy evaluation in education or international development, as well as oral and writing skills in English of the highest standard.
- A gender balanced team of international and national experts is strongly desired.
- Experts can only be part of one proposal for these terms of reference. Contractors can only submit one proposal

#### D. Pricing (20%)

The budget should include all costs, including travel and accommodation for visits (if permitted). In-country transport in the capital/major cities, where required and allowed, is to be budgeted for. Travel in-country to the field, where appropriate and within reason, is covered by Plan International UK. The budget should provide details so that costs of expertise, travel and other expenses are visible. The costing should be done for the data collection scenarios described in Section 9 above.

The estimated budget for this work is £120,000 inclusive of VAT at a rate of 20% (applicable to the entire budget). Applicants registered outside of the UK should note that the VAT element will be paid directly by Plan International UK to the UK tax authorities and, therefore, will not form part of their payment tranches. Applicants registered within the UK should note that they will be responsible for paying the VAT element directly to the UK tax authorities. A lumpsum contract will be provided. The contract will be in GBP.

The proposed payment schedule is:

- 20% at approval of inception report
- 40% at approval of draft evaluation report
- 20% at approval of final evaluation report
- 20% at submission of deliverables 6-9 (publishable summary of evaluation findings; slide deck for presenting findings; presentations of findings; provision of data sets, metadata and tools ready for submission to UK Data Archive)

## 14. Bibliography and resources

Documents about the GEC can be found [here](#)

Other documentation will be shared electronically as requested with all applicants.

## Annexes

# Annex A: Project design and intervention

## Project design and intervention

Activity	What output will the intervention contribute to?	What Intermediate Outcome will the intervention will contribute to and how?	How will the intervention contribute to achieving the learning, transition and sustainability outcomes?	Start to end date of activity	Target beneficiaries (and numbers)
Distribution of food, dignity kits and bursary items	<b>Output 1: Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are provided support to enable the transition back into education</b>	Targeted marginalised girls and children with disabilities return to school and regularly attend school classes	Learning – supports children to return to education	December 2020 - January 2021	Marginalised girls and boys with disabilities (approximately 8,000)
Allocation/ distribution of targeted assistive devices, learning aids and/or provision of individualized treatments	<b>Output 1: Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are provided support to enable the transition back into education</b>	Targeted marginalised girls and children with disabilities return to school and regularly attend school classes	Learning – supports children to return to education	September 2020 - March 2021	Children with disabilities (300)
Grant support to VSLAs	<b>Output 1: Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are provided support to enable the transition back into education</b>	Targeted marginalised girls and children with disabilities return to school and regularly attend school classes	Learning – supports children to return to education	December 2020 - January 2021	VSLA groups (200)
Back to school messaging to students and communities	<b>Output 1: Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are provided support to enable the transition back into education</b>	Targeted marginalised girls and children with disabilities return to school and regularly attend school classes	Learning – supports children to return to education	September – December 2020	Marginalised girls and boys with disabilities (approximately 8,000)
STs keeping in contact with girls to facilitate return to school and provide general support	<b>Output 2: Educators receive materials, training, CPD, coaching and supportive supervision to equip them in providing quality learning support to girls and CWDs</b>	Teachers/schools provide effective teaching practices and differentiated learning support to marginalised learners	Transition and Learning	December 2020 – June 2021	Marginalised girls (number TBD based on reverification and demographic analysis) STs (400+)
Development and training of resource material for students and CPD material for teachers	<b>Output 2: Educators receive materials, training, CPD, coaching and supportive</b>	Teachers/schools provide effective teaching practices and differentiated learning support to	Transition and Learning	September 2020 – June 2021	Marginalised girls and boys with disabilities (approximately 8,000)

	<i>supervision to equip them in providing quality learning support to girls and CWDs</i>	marginalised learners			
Study Groups	<b>Output 2: Educators receive materials, training, CPD, coaching and supportive supervision to equip them in providing quality learning support to girls and CWDs</b>	Teachers/schools provide effective teaching practices and differentiated learning support to marginalised learners	Transition and Learning	October 2020 – July 2021	Marginalised girls and boys with disabilities (approximately 8,000)
Provision of female-only after school Girls' Clubs	<b>Output 3: Girls are able to learn in a safer and more supportive environment; while communities are engaged and mobilized to offer a more supportive and protective environment for girls</b>	Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are safer and more supported by their schools and communities	Transition and learning	October 2020 – July 2021	Primary school girls (number TBD based on reverification and demographic analysis)
Training on GESI, safeguarding, referral, PSS/PFA, peer working relationships	<b>Output 3: Girls are able to learn in a safer and more supportive environment; while communities are engaged and mobilized to offer a more supportive and protective environment for girls</b>	Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are safer and more supported by their schools and communities	Transition and learning	September 2020 – November 2021	STs (400+) PVs (1359, as of midline) HTs (467, as of midline) School staff (exact number TBD) CBRVs (141)
VAs to engage VSLA groups in discussion on gender and power in the home, adolescent SRHR, GBV, etc.	<b>Output 3: Girls are able to learn in a safer and more supportive environment; while communities are engaged and mobilized to offer a more supportive and protective environment for girls</b>	Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are safer and more supported by their schools and communities	Transition and learning	October 2020 – May 2021	VSLA members within 200 VSLA groups
Provide psychosocial support to beneficiaries through MHPSS hotline	<b>Output 3: Girls are able to learn in a safer and more supportive environment; while communities are engaged and</b>	Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are safer and more supported by their schools and communities	Transition and learning	October 2020 – July 2021	Marginalised girls and boys with disabilities (approximately 8,000)

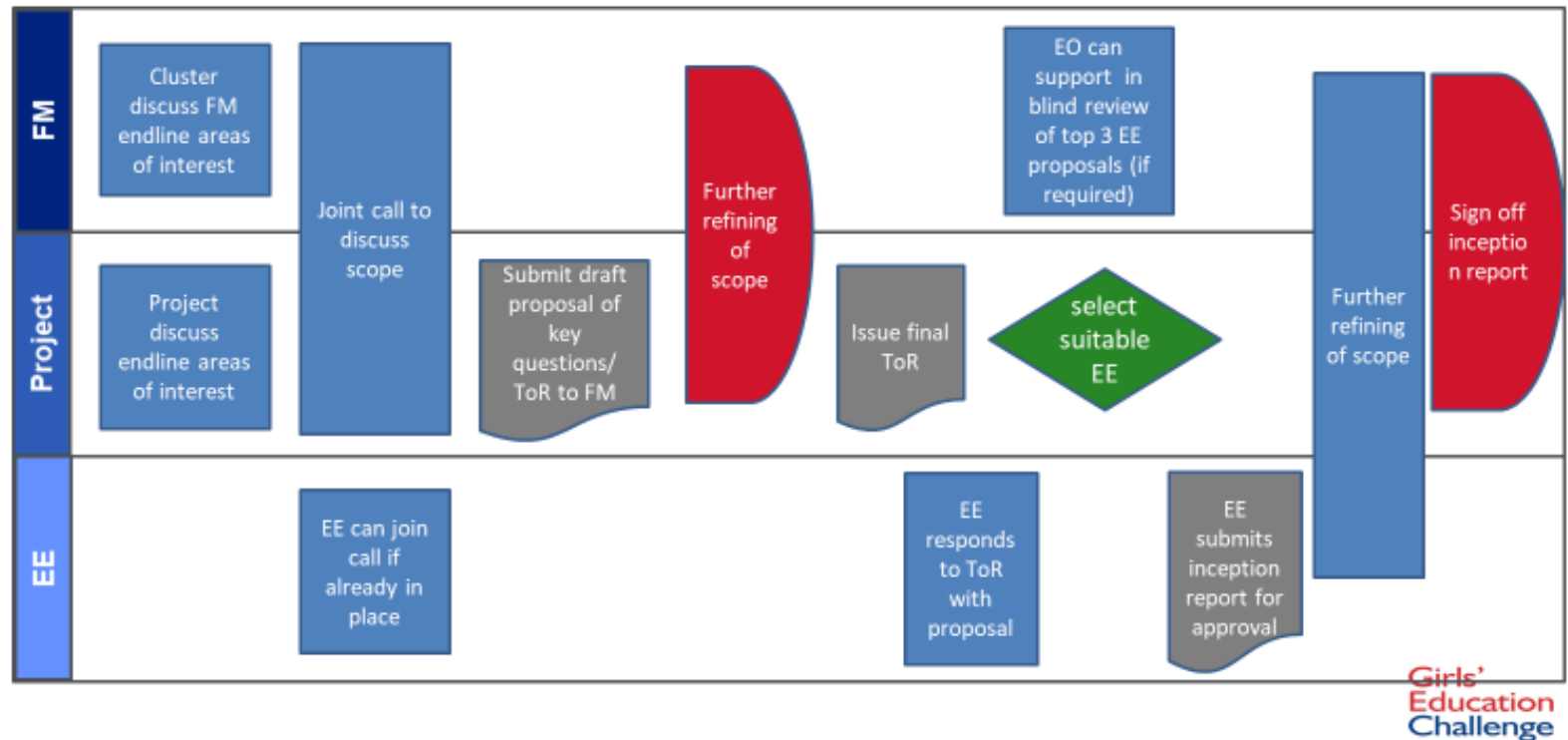


	<i><b>mobilized to offer a more supportive and protective environment for girls</b></i>				
Model Schools	<i><b>Output 3: Girls are able to learn in a safer and more supportive environment; while communities are engaged and mobilized to offer a more supportive and protective environment for girls</b></i>	Marginalised girls and children with disabilities are safer and more supported by their schools and communities	Transition and learning	September 2020 – March 2021	Children with disabilities (number TBD based on reverification and demographic analysis)
Quarterly National Steering Committee meetings	<i><b>Output 4: Programme evidence and learning is shared with key decision makers and actors to influence the Sierra Leonean and wider Education sector; and promote opportunities for marginalised learners and girls</b></i>	Consistent level of shared learning, collaboration, influence and advocacy around inclusive, gender responsive education policies	Sustainability	November 2020 – May 2021	Ministry officials (number TBD)
Coordination with MBSSE through the Education Emergency Task Force and with the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs	<i><b>Output 4: Programme evidence and learning is shared with key decision makers and actors to influence the Sierra Leonean and wider Education sector; and promote opportunities for marginalised learners and girls</b></i>	Consistent level of shared learning, collaboration, influence and advocacy around inclusive, gender responsive education policies	Sustainability	September 2020 – July 2021	Ministry officials (number TBD)
Collaboration with Leh We Lan - GLADI, EAGER the Teaching Service Commission and other relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment and sustainability of project interventions	<i><b>Output 4: Programme evidence and learning is shared with key decision makers and actors to influence the Sierra Leonean and wider Education sector; and promote opportunities for marginalised learners and girls</b></i>	Consistent level of shared learning, collaboration, influence and advocacy around inclusive, gender responsive education policies	Sustainability	September 2020 – July 2021	Stakeholders (number TBD)
Project Joint Monitoring with	<i><b>Output 4: Programme evidence and</b></i>	Consistent level of shared learning, collaboration,	Sustainability	November 2020 – May 2021	Ministry officials (Number TBD)

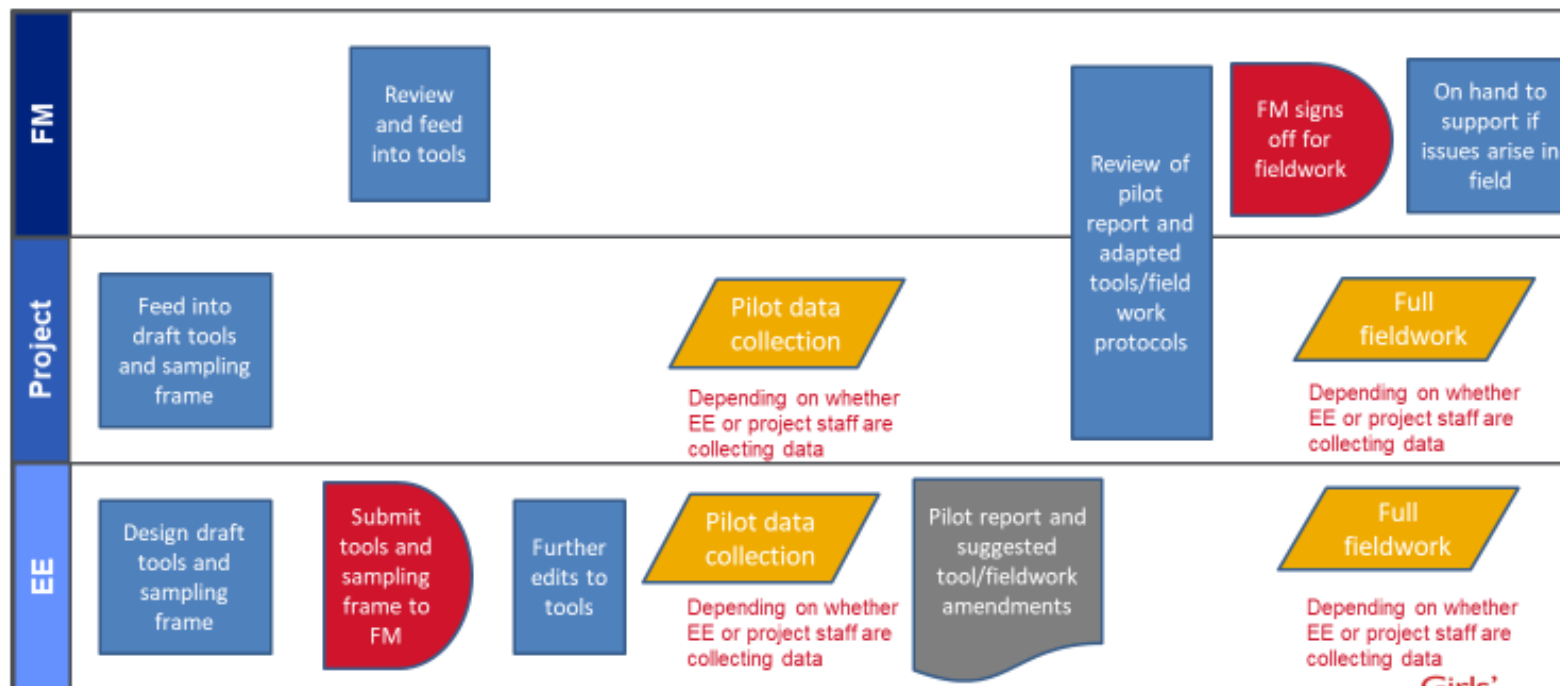
MBSSE, TSC, MGCA and FCDO	<b><i>learning is shared with key decision makers and actors to influence the Sierra Leonean and wider Education sector; and promote opportunities for marginalised learners and girls</i></b>	influence and advocacy around inclusive, gender responsive education policies			
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# Annex B: Outline process map for GEC-T Endline Evaluations

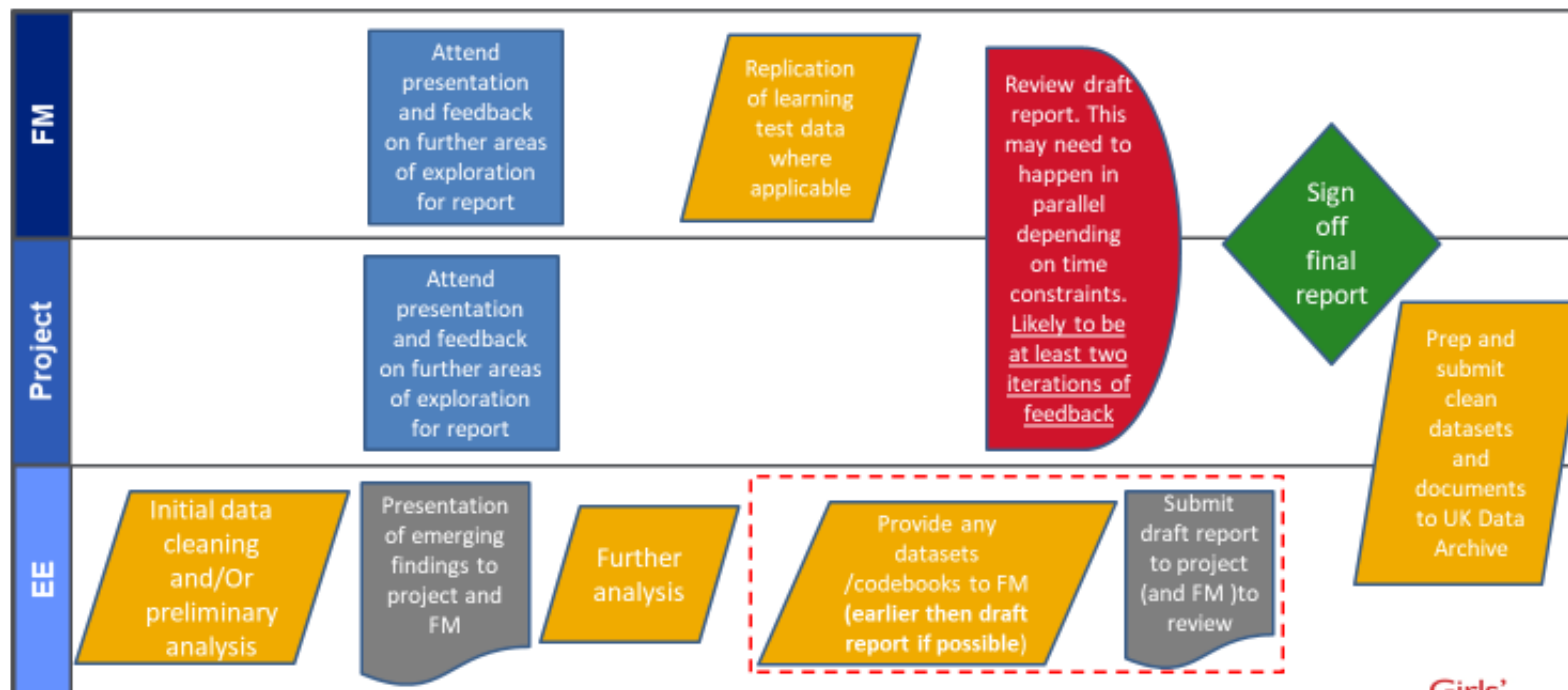
## Inception/Design



## Tool Design and Fieldwork



# Analysis and Reporting



## Dissemination/Learning



## Annex C: GEC-T Endline Report Annexes

Please select the link below to download a compressed folder with the following GATE-GEC project annexes:

[GATE-GEC Endline Evaluation Annexes](#)

- Annex 1 – Original GATE-GEC Theory of Change
- Annex 2 – Original GATE-GEC MEL Framework
- Annex 3 – Original GATE-GEC Logframe (Updated at Midline)
- Annex 4 – Revised GATE-GEC Theory of Change
- Annex 5 – GATE-GEC Covid Short-Term Response (Apr-Jun 2020)
- Annex 6 – GATE-GEC Covid Medium-Term Response (Sept 2020-Jul 2021)
- Annex 7 – Revised GATE-GEC Output Framework (Sept 2020-Jul 2021)
- Annex 8 – GATE-GEC Baseline Evaluation Report
- Annex 9 – GATE-GEC Midline Evaluation Report
- Annex 10 – Plan Child-Centred Community Development Standards
- Annex 11 – Plan Global Policy on Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Annex 12 – Bond Evidence Principles Checklist
- Annex 13 – Plan International Gender Transformative Guidance Note