



Terms of Reference for Pacific Literacy and School Leadership Programme

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About this document

This document specifies the terms of reference for delivery of services to improve the quality of education and literacy outcomes in three Pacific countries (Cook Islands, Tonga, and Solomon Islands) initially, under the Pacific Literacy and School Leadership Programme (PLSLP), through one or more suppliers.

Goals and Outcomes of the PLSLP

The goals of the Pacific Literacy and School Leadership Programme are:

1. Children in primary schools in Pacific countries are able to read and write, at agreed national standards for their age, so that they can complete primary schooling successfully
2. Effective system level and primary school leadership, leading to improved quality of basic education in Pacific countries.

The high level outcomes are:

1. Improved literacy outcomes for children in primary schools, in years 1-3 and through the transition to learning in English
2. Effective literacy teaching in primary schools, with a focus on learning and use of assessment tools
3. Relevant resources available and used effectively by teachers
4. Effective educational leadership in primary schools with a focus on teaching, learning and assessment of literacy
5. Increased Ministry capability to lead and manage changes in teaching and leadership, resources and infrastructure
6. School environments that support achievement of clear learning goals with community support and engagement
7. Improved understanding of literacy learning and teaching of reading and writing

Outputs

Outputs to be delivered to achieve the outcomes:

- Teachers trained in effective teaching strategies and assessment
- Principals trained as leaders of literacy learning for their schools
- Literacy leaders trained to support change in classrooms
- Support provided at school/classroom level through workshops, monitoring and feedback
- Significant numbers of early readers for students and resource materials for teachers
- Electronic support materials developed, if needed
- Feedback on effectiveness of teaching strategies and monitoring to assess the overall impact of the initiative, through action research
- Strategic and technical coordination of literacy initiatives, across projects and the education sector

The range of outputs for each country will be determined by in-country priorities and analysis of related work underway through other initiatives, ensuring overall coverage of the change model components.

Inception Phase – First 2 months

Funding for the inception phase will be provided through the programme.

No.	Output	Inputs/tasks	Due date
1	Work plan detailing country specific implementation arrangements of the PLSLP model – with specific inputs identified for the first year and indicative inputs for outyears.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In country visit - Consultation with key stakeholders - Analysis of current literacy developments - Development and negotiation of work plan - Development of budget, including all personnel costs, resources and management costs 	Two months from start of contract.
2	Detailed budget to support work plan outlined in 1.		
3	Inception phase report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of inception phase report, including new and revised information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o data and analysis used to inform decision making o programme overview o methodology and approach o implementation work plan o budget o risk management framework o monitoring framework o results framework 	

Respondents are invited to submit an approach, work plan and proposed price for the completion of Inception Phase work (outputs 1 - 3) and an approach, work plan and pricing for the Implementation Phase, noting that the components of the Implementation Phase may be adjusted following the inception phase.

Subject to internal MFAT approval of the final Inception work plan and budget for the PLSLP, it is anticipated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) would negotiate with the successful proposer for the delivery of some or all of the Implementation Phase services. Therefore, only respondents that can provide all outputs for both phases should apply. MFAT reserves the right to:

- determine which Implementation Phase services will be required;
- make changes to the team for the Implementation Phase in the event that different expertise is required;
- terminate the contract after the Inception Phase if a contract variation covering delivery of some or all the Implementation Phase services are not agreed or required;
- Seek competitive proposals for the Implementation of Phase at its sole discretion.

Please note that the following additional outputs will be required as part of the implementation of the programme and will be covered in the contract variation following finalisation of the Inception Phase.

The inception report must be accepted and approved by MFAT and partner Ministries of Education prior to commitment to and commencement of the implementation phase.

Implementation Phase

Indicative funding for implementation phase: up to 6 million NZD, across three countries, over three years.

No.	Output	Indicative inputs/tasks
1	Teachers, principals (for up to 15 schools) and literacy leaders trained and supported in effective teaching strategies and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of schools, teachers, principals and literacy leaders to work with - Development and delivery of training workshops and materials for teachers, principals and literacy leaders - In class support - Mentoring and peer support

No.	Output	Indicative inputs/tasks
2	Resources (readers, teacher materials, electronic materials) developed and distributed for use in schools, to directly support training provided for literacy learning and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of current materials and identification of gaps/critical areas of need. - Development of appropriate and good quality readers, workbooks and teacher support materials in line with training being provided. - Production and distribution of materials. - Assessment of materials use and revision and reproduction as required.
3	Action research that provides feedback on effectiveness of teaching strategies and monitoring to assess the overall impact of the initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop framework and systems/processes research and feedback loops - Identify and train action research facilitators - Conduct action research to determine effective strategies - Report on findings to governance/steering groups
4	Strategic and technical coordination on literacy initiatives across projects and the education sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In-country programme steering and governance groups including key Ministry representatives and relevant development partners - Technical coordination of literacy initiatives established - Training provided for Ministry of Education personnel and key stakeholders to strengthen strategic oversight and planning for literacy developments

Quarterly reporting will be provided to MFAT and Ministries of Education directly, and will be the basis of discussion, analysis and forward planning in governance and steering groups.

Methodology

Tendering overview

The programme will be delivered in up to three countries, by either one or more suppliers. Tenderers can opt to deliver the services in one, two or all three of the countries. Close liaison with and coordination of work being undertaken in each country will be required. Governance and management arrangements should reflect and support this. MFAT may contract an additional overarching programme management function to oversee the full programme if needed, particularly if separate contracts are let for in-country implementation.

The nominated Pacific countries are progressing multiple initiatives to improve literacy outcomes, teaching and school leadership. A number of new initiatives have been under development at the same time in each of the three countries. The PLSLP design has developed a comprehensive and coherent model for effecting change that will make a difference at both system and classroom levels. The proposed approach for each country will need to be

assessed in the inception phase and confirmed or revised to ensure that all elements of the change model are covered through this work and/or by the initiatives underway or under development.

Tenderers will provide: a programme of work, a detailed budget, a results framework to monitor and evaluate the programme, a risk matrix based on the PLSLP design documents, with revisions to accommodate changes in country since design or to further promote best practice.

Applicants should identify critical / high level risks, including the following:

1. Countries' ability to engage in multi-level interventions and potential risks to achieving results
2. Potential for divergence, weakening of the core model and reduction in effectiveness of outcomes due to complexity of the programme, within and across three countries, with potentially different providers

and mitigation strategies to address the identified risks.

A country specific risk management plan will be developed in the inception phase of the contract in conjunction with the workplan development processes.

Given the breadth and depth of expertise needed to deliver the programme components sub-contracting some elements of the work (e.g. materials development and/or production, action research, technical advice) may be required. Tenderers must identify potential subcontractors, why this is the best method for delivery of those components of the work and their approach to managing the quality and delivery of sub-contracted work.

Inception phase

The first phase of the work in each country will require an inception visit to:

- consult with Ministries of Education and key stakeholders
- assess the current status of literacy and leadership developments and how changes since the design work was done impact on the proposed application of the change model,
- negotiate with Ministries of Education the details of work to be provided through the programme to complement existing initiatives
- assess potential for local recruitment for key roles
- determine criteria for selecting schools and participants, to maximise impact.

A detailed workplan and budget will be submitted for approved by each of the partner Ministries and MFAT. Agreement on the workplan and budget is a pre-requisite for continuation of the contract and commencement of the implementation phase.

It is expected that this will take the first few months of the contract.

Implementation Phase

Programme implementation will require a mix of in-country and external expertise for management and technical inputs. Proposers will need to outline clearly internal and external inputs, including rationales for their use, and proposed time in-country by external personnel over the three and a half year period. There is an expectation that, at least in the first year of implementation, significant management and technical inputs will be needed in country.

The programme will work in a complex environment, with other donor and ministry programmes working in areas that touch on or directly influence the work of this programme. Technical coherence in and coordination of literacy, school leadership and system change work, as well as programme management, will need to be addressed.

The development of materials will be designed specifically to each context, build on existing materials and fill key gaps. They are expected to include explicit routines, practices and tools to be used by teachers and leaders. They must directly align with the training and support being provided to teachers and be appropriate for the level and ability of the students. Supplier/s will be expected to provide best value for money and quality in the production of the materials.

The supplier/s will develop and oversee action research on the programme outcomes to build understanding of what works in particular contexts, and why, to change literacy practices and classroom outcomes substantially and sustainably.

Team Composition

Proposers will nominate key personnel who have:

- Deep technical knowledge of how children learn to read and best practices in teaching to support this.
- Deep technical knowledge of and successful experience in development and delivery of professional development and support that delivers lasting change in teaching practices at classroom level.
- Up to date knowledge of and successful experience in systems level change in education.
- Understanding of how school leadership can effect change in the classroom.
- Successful experience of working alongside people in the Pacific to implement change and grow in-country capacity.
- Experience in development and production of materials for students and teachers to support literacy developments.
- Demonstrated ability to successfully manage a complex programme, off shore from the delivery location and with coordination across other countries and agencies involved in the work.
- Ability to manage sub-contracting to selected organisations or specialists for required expertise and delivery.

Performance Standards

Quality standards that apply

Work will be delivered within MFAT and country best practice guidelines. Programme delivery will be assessed against its effectiveness in achieving outcomes, including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

Programme work, including reporting, will be delivered within agreed timeframes and budgets and in full consultation with MFAT and partner Ministries of Education.

How quality standards will be measured, when and by whom

Quality standards will be assessed by MFAT, partner Ministries of Education and governance/steering groups following the submission of each of the quarterly programme reports.

An overarching assessment will be made at the end of each year through the Activity Management Assessment and in the last year of the programme through the Activity Completion Assessment and an evaluation. These processes will be managed by MFAT, in full consultation with partner Ministries of Education.

Background

Background

The programme is a response to poor literacy results evident in early grades and throughout schooling in Pacific countries. These results highlight the need to address this issue as directly and urgently as possible. Improving literacy outcomes is now a high priority for Pacific Ministers of Education and development partners.

Interventions to address these issues need to provide intensive support, directly to teachers in classrooms, principals and at system level. The support needs to be delivered in sufficient quantity and regularly over time to deliver critical mass sustainable change.

To respond to this MFAT contracted design work for two programmes to address literacy and school leadership issues, to complement the education support provided through bilateral education programmes.

The design teams proposed a single integrated intervention that addresses system change, literacy and primary school leadership. The programme design is deliberately different from other education support as it identifies the overall change process, targets key components that are critical to effective and lasting change and will help countries better understand the nature of conditions for successful change and how to scale up interventions effectively.

The Programme

This new initiative will improve literacy teaching and reading achievement in Pacific countries and deliver sustainable and systemic change within education systems, schools and classrooms. It will deliver intensive training and support at the classroom level, appropriate resources for students and teachers, school principals as 'leaders of learning' and support for strategic management at Ministry level. The programme will also build evidence based knowledge relevant for Pacific countries, on what works in changing literacy practices and outcomes in specific contexts.

The design has a core model for change which has been developed based on an analysis of what is known about what works and why in education. The design proposed some options for country specific implementation of the model. The context in each country has however moved on since the initial design period and there is a need to work more intensively with stakeholders in each country to specifically tailor the programme to the current needs.

This programme differs from other projects that provide specific, often isolated, inputs of technical advice and training. It takes a deliberate whole of system approach that covers technical assistance to support policy development and implementation, teacher development, and literacy and leadership capability. The design incorporates an action research and monitoring component that will identify and specifically measure the key conditions for successful, sustainable change. This is a new and innovative approach designed to deliver deep and sustainable changes at system and school levels.

The programme will deliver:

- Training and support, including classroom observation, modelling and feedback loops, for teachers, principals and literacy leaders
- School leaders as 'leaders of learning'
- Improved understanding across the education system of literacy development, approaches to teaching and learning and how to bring about change
- Development and provision of appropriate literacy resources
- Ministries' capacity built to develop/oversee/drive literacy strategies and focus on results in classrooms

The intention is that, following initial implementation, the initiative could be extended to provide expansion in countries or replication to additional countries.

Partner Description

The programme is partnering with Pacific countries with which New Zealand has bilateral relationships and substantive education support programmes, and where countries are working to improve literacy outcomes. Solomon Islands, Tonga and the Cook Islands have agreed in principle to participate in this programme.

Ministries of Education will be key partners. The Ministries of Education in the three nominated countries have set improvement to literacy outcomes and teacher capability as high priority for change. In each country they are developing strategic approaches to make a significant difference in these areas. Engagement in this work now will enhance and strengthen country initiatives and this programme will contribute to making the difference.

The first phase of implementation will develop more specific in-country plans tailored to each specific context. Ministries are expecting to be closely involved in this process and will be part of the decision making processes including approving suppliers, workplans and staffing.

Relevant reports/documentation

The following documents are relevant to the services (attached as appendices):

1. Activity Design Pacific Literacy and School Leadership Programme

Other background documents will be supplied to the selected supplier/s.

Governance and management

The Programme will be managed by the Development Manager/s – Education, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Depending on the number and abilities of the selected

supplier/s an overarching programme management function may be provided.

A high level governance / steering group will be established across the countries, ministries and supplier/s to share learnings from the programme and related initiatives, assess progress, and advise on programme adjustments over the life of the programme.

Country specific governance and management arrangements will need to be developed during the inception phase of the contract. It is critical that Ministries and key stakeholders are included in all strategic management or oversight of the programme.

Appendix 1: Activity Design Pacific Literacy and School Leadership Programme

The following summary provides an outline of the programme and its proposed components. Further detailed information will be available on request.

Pacific Literacy and School Leadership Programme (PLSLP) Design Summary

Rationale

The key focus areas for this programme are improved literacy outcomes, improved teaching and improved school and system level leadership. The driver for these changes is primarily the documented low literacy achievement scores for many students in the Pacific region. Literacy is a critical foundation for success in schooling and economic and social developments.

Literacy is now a key focus for improvement in most Pacific education systems. Previously, the operational policy and human resource in many Pacific countries has been focused on school-based management activities, the revision of curricula, and improving access to education. While there are goals for improved literacy achievement, the pathway to achieving this has not been clear.

There are multiple factors that impact on literacy achievements including:

- access, engagement, and retention in primary schooling
- insufficient and sometimes inadequate materials, often limited to a small number of readers, loosely graded for classroom instruction
- approaches to teaching, including assessment
- language/s of instruction and the multi-lingual environments many students live in
- insufficient support for teachers to change teaching practices
- focus in school leadership on administration and management, and rarely on instructional leadership
- in some places an acute lack of local expertise around effective teaching of reading.

In many contexts, initiatives to improve teaching and outcomes for students have impacted on small areas of a whole system and changes have not been not systematic or sustained. System level development (e.g. curricula reviews, policy development, process developments, teacher training, capability building) have all been necessary to build foundations for educational improvements, but have not been sufficient to make a difference in classroom outcomes. The PLSLP will complement bilateral education sector support programmes through an integrated whole of system change model. The integrated system, leadership, and literacy design of the PLSLP is deliberately different from other supports that target particular components of the sector as it will streamline

and connect system, school leadership, and teaching practices around a pivotal and priority focus on students' literacy achievement, and focus on making a demonstrable difference at the classroom level. It will address gaps, build on strengths, and co-ordinate effective implementation models that reach school leaders, classroom teachers, and their students. The overall intention is to have a programme of sufficient depth to make a significant and lasting difference to the teaching of reading and writing and to improve student outcomes.

Programme Outline

The Pacific Literacy and Leadership Programme has two strategic goals which state that:

1. Children in Pacific countries are able to read and write, at agreed national standards for their age, so that they can complete primary schooling successfully
2. The quality of basic education in the Pacific will improve through effective system and primary school leadership.

In order to achieve these goals, there are a number of specific outcomes that shape the programme design, guide the implementation phase and are the foci for monitoring and evaluation. The outcomes include:

- improved literacy outcomes for children, specifically in early years of schooling and through transition to learning in English
- effective literacy teaching in primary schools with a focus on learning and use of assessment tools
- improved understanding of literacy acquisition and teaching of reading and writing
- relevant, appropriate resources available and used effectively by teachers
- effective educational leadership in primary schools with a focus on teaching, learning, and assessment of literacy
- increased system capability to lead and manage changes in teaching and leadership, resources and infrastructure
- enabling school environments with community support and engagement.

In terms of literacy, the programme is intended to deliver:

- development and provision of literacy resources
- training and support for teachers, principals, and literacy leaders
- improved understanding of literacy development and approaches to teaching and learning.

For school leader development, the programme will support school leaders to become pedagogical leaders, or 'leaders of learning', through its focus on school leaders as leaders of literacy learning.

The programme design is a 'collective impact model'. It directs all parts of the system towards a focal point of improving students' literacy achievement. This creates a 'chain of influence'¹ that avoids silos of innovation at particular levels or parts of a system and allows for the testing of conditions for success. In this instance, the pivotal focus is on literacy education. Its value also lies in the fact that the collective impact model can act as a blueprint for other priority areas for schooling improvement.

The core elements of the collective impact design include:

1. a literacy strategy and system taskforce, a guiding coalition, to support and monitor implementation
2. a programme team for implementation, including facilitator roles
3. nested research and development to inform understandings about the conditions for success, sustainability, and scale through analysis of the impact of the implementation activities as they are enacted.
4. a capability improvement cycle used as a blueprint for professional learning at system, programme and school levels, with three cycles of implementation in 15 schools over 3 years, ready to be scaled in following years
5. ongoing monitoring and evaluation for stakeholders.

Solomon Islands, Tonga, and the Cook Islands have agreed in principal to participate in the Programme. Each of these countries has an active programme of change underway to support improved literacy learning. They provide a geographical spread across the Pacific and each country has different challenges in relation to improving literacy outcomes. They also have different strengths and needs at all levels of the system - across policy development, school leadership, classroom teaching, professional learning, curriculum materials, donor partner, and community supports.

It will be delivered in up to 15 schools in each country, involving principals and literacy leaders and all teachers of years 1-3. The total investment supports substantive new literacy materials for students, teachers and school leaders and targets up to:

- 45 schools (including outer island schools)
- 45 principals and 45 literacy leaders
- 180 teachers.

The design for the Pacific Literacy and Leadership Programme has been informed by in-country liaison with Pacific ministers of education, their chief executives, senior department heads of staff, posts and selected school leaders and teachers.

¹ Timperley, & Parr, 2009; Dreaver, 2009
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The model is built upon sound educational and system improvement principles that can be tailored to the unique reality of each context. The principles that inform the collective impact design of the Pacific Leadership and Literacy Programme are built on what is known about what works and why in education. There are a number of technical frameworks that underpin the programme, including system improvement research, effective professional development design (change management), effective leadership of learning, effective teaching of early reading, and the implications for designing effective literacy learning materials (at foundation years). These technical frameworks can also serve as a 'smart tool'² for Pacific countries to use as a cohering device to align their strategy to policy and their internal activities with all provider activities.

² Robinson et al. (2009) present a set of criteria for the design of a 'smart tool' that is effective in conveying important ideas across the boundaries of different communities so that they are understood in similar ways. Smart tools: are based on sound theories; convey knowledge about what is involved in achieving a particular task; are designed in ways that make them easy to understand and use. A proviso is that tools can only truly be designated 'smart' if the evidence indicates that they actually do advance valued outcomes for students.