



**R I S E**

**Realising Inclusive  
and Safe Education**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR BASELINE EVALUATION  
External Consultant**



## List of Acronyms

CfCR	Chance for Childhood, Rwanda
CWD	Children with Disabilities
IE	Inclusive Education
LCDM	Link Community Development Malawi
LEI	Link Education International
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
MoE	Ministry of Education
OPD	Organisations of people with disabilities
RISE	Realising Inclusive and Safe Education
StSZ	School to School, Zambia

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## 1. Introduction

*Realising Inclusive and Safe Education* or '[RISE](#)' is a five-year, multi-country project funded by the Scottish Government. In Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia, RISE will strengthen government support for children with disabilities allowing such children to access a safe and quality education. RISE is a consortium of four partners, led by Link Education International (LEI) and project partners Link Community Development Malawi (LCDM), Chance for Childhood Rwanda (CfCR) and School to School Zambia (StSZ).

The project aims to:

- Identify, assess and support learners through the provision of assistive devices and links to medical help and social services
- strengthen teachers' and leadership training in gender and inclusive education, and
- engage communities (including parents<sup>1</sup> with or without children with disabilities (CWD) and/or special educational needs (SEN), and school governance bodies to better support children with disabilities.

This consortium will draw on extensive experience to co-design and deliver, alongside government partners, Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs), schools and communities, a project that will meet the diverse needs of the RISE participants.

Link Community Development Malawi (LCDM) is a locally registered non-governmental organisation working since 2006 in multiple districts in Malawi. LCDM strives to improve education for children in disadvantaged, rural areas, and works in partnership with every level of government, engaging with local communities to deliver holistic projects that remove barriers to education and help all children flourish. LCDM focuses on enhancing teaching, learning and school management, developing life skills, promoting equality and inclusion for all learners, strengthening safeguarding practices, building community voice, engagement and accountability and capacity strengthening and partnership with district education officers.

Chance for Childhood Rwanda (CfCR) is a child-centred and non-governmental organisation committed to addressing complex issues faced by children who find themselves marginalised from society and vital services, such as children with disabilities (CWD). With its strategic areas of Inclusive Education (IE) and Safe Spaces, CfCR designs projects that affect change at an individual, community, and institutional level. Its activities include teacher, parent, service provider and community training to enhance early identification, assessment of developmental delays and disabilities and appropriate referral mechanisms. CfCR has been working in Rwanda for 14 years in 22 districts.

School to School Zambia (StSZ) is a locally registered non-governmental organisation committed to improving the lives and learning of girls and boys in Zambia through thoughtful research,

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, 'parents' includes all 'caregivers'.

practice and partnership. StSZ has worked to strengthen and support the education system in Zambia since 2012, including strengthening teacher pre-service education, improving access to quality inclusive education, and developing a comprehensive report on Zambia's progress towards education-focused Sustainable Development Goals.

Link Education International (LEI) is experienced in adaptive project management and appropriate oversight for multi-country projects, as well as consortium management including oversight of risk management, duty of care and aligned delivery. LEI has delivered multi-million-pound, multi-year programmes across Malawi, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Uganda concurrently, managing complex budgets for a diverse range of donors. LEI creates values-led governance structures to share learning between countries and amplify the voices of those delivering. Our adaptive management approach emphasises clear communication among programme staff, participants, government stakeholders, and donors, and embeds structured review, adaptation, and feedback loops, ensuring a needs-led approach.

LEI and its consortium partners have a strong track record of working with Ministries of Education (MoE) and local communities to co-design participatory inclusive education programmes, amplifying marginalised voices and furthering national education plans. Programme design is guided by expertise from the global south, and delivery is locally owned and led, to ensure we go beyond aid to effect sustainable development. LEI's consortium leadership brings Scottish experience, providing learning from its 30 years history including successful delivery of Scottish Government-funded projects.

## **2. Background and Rationale**

This project will address the barriers faced by children with disabilities (CWD), particularly girls, in accessing and completing school, as well as in achieving the expected inclusion, learning and active participation when they are there. The baseline evaluation will mobilise evidence across Rwanda, Malawi and Zambia on the barriers that CWD face in:

**Access, enrolment and attendance:** Accessing, enrolling and attending school regularly.

**Retention:** Being retained in school so that CWD continue through to the end of the programme.

**Perception:** The way CWD's household, school and community perceive them having a disability.

**Wellbeing:** How being seen separate to the rest of the household, school and community can affect CWDs' level of confidence, and in addition how poor safeguarding and safety additionally impact. More information on RISE rationale can be found in the RISE Theory of Change in Appendix 1.

## **3. Purpose and Objectives of the Project**

The objective of RISE is to identify the extent that CWD, particularly girls, can access and remain in a safe, inclusive and quality education so that policy and practice can be improved.

The project baseline study data is structured to serve as a benchmark for monitoring and evaluating the project's progress towards achieving its outcomes. It also aims to offer

recommendations for revising the project's decision making in achieving its four outcomes of improved access enrolment and attendance, improved retention, improved perception of CWDs and improved wellbeing.

**Outcome 1: Access, enrolment and attendance: CWD, particularly girls, can access and attend mainstream education**

- Through improved access to enrolment to school, enrolment and regular attendance of CWDs in schools will increase. A more accessible enrolment process uses appropriate screening tools and provides onward support through provision of assistive devices or referral.

**Outcome 2: Retention: CWD, particularly girls, remain in school for the duration of the programme**

- School staff, including school leaders, are trained in inclusive classroom practice which supports CWDs to stay in school and transition through grades in school.

**Outcome 3: Perception: There is positive change in the perception of CWD, particularly girls, and their families**

- There is a reduction in stigma and negative social norms that surround CWD, leading to families bringing their children in for assessment, enrolment into school, and supporting them to be part of the school community.

**Outcome 4: Wellbeing: CWD, particularly girls, feel safe and have more confidence**

- Community members, parents and school staff are oriented to the safety and wellbeing of children with disabilities, particularly girls, so that CWD feel safer and have increased confidence. Community champions and role models support the safety, wellbeing and confidence of CWD.

This evaluation is part of a process of feedback and learning as it is intending to inform tool development and data collection which will be implemented by LCDM, CfCR and StSZ. It will also set the standards that will be used to measure any changes over the course of the programme.

#### 4. Scope of the Baseline Study

The consultant will work in harmony with RISE partners to complete the baseline, holding responsibility for:

1. **Lead:** The development of a MEL framework to cover the whole duration (5 years) of RISE
2. **Lead:** Developing the baseline design report – including design methodology, sampling framework, gender and social inclusion (with a focus on disability) analysis and a workplan of activities
3. Reviewing, and amending where necessary, the RISE suite of tools
4. Providing quality assurance recommendations for data collection
5. **Lead:** Carrying out data cleaning (post country cleaning)
6. **Lead:** Carrying out analysis – including relevant disaggregated data that is gender-sensitive and disaggregated by other characteristics, e.g. age group, disability, race, sexual orientation, incorporating findings from the baseline data collections in all three countries to initiate a final consolidated study report
7. **Lead:** Presentation of initial findings – overall findings and findings for each country, contextualized
8. **Lead:** Development of a high quality, brief publishable report of the main findings and case studies, and clear recommendations

RISE partners will lead on the following activities:

1. Review the MEL framework with the consultant
2. Review the baseline design report with the consultant
3. **Lead:** Tool development, in liaison with the consultant
4. **Lead:** Data collection training
5. **Lead:** Data collection scheduling & quality control of data collection
6. **Lead:** Data cleaning (country level) and contextualization
7. Review the final report, in liaison with the consultant

#### 5. Approach and Methodology

The method of data collection for this baseline is mixed-methods. However, the consultant is expected to define a more detailed methodological approach in the MEL framework and inception report.

- The study should consciously apply qualitative and quantitative research methods that are disability and gender sensitive, and engage as much as possible in participatory approaches;
- The geographic scope of the study will be aligned with the targeted areas, schools, households and community stakeholders targeted by the project as laid out in the project description;

- The final suite of tools used to establish RBF indicator baselines should be adapted to the local contexts in each country, to assure the appropriateness and reliability of the data collected.

The overarching research questions linked to these outcomes are as follows:

<b>Research Question 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are the characteristics of disability that affect enrolment and attendance?</li> <li>- How does access to enrolment and attendance in RISE target schools change for CWDs over the life of the project?</li> <li>- Does access to enrolment and attendance differ by characteristic, i.e. disability type, severity of disability, gender and location?</li> </ul>
<b>Research Question 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do the different characteristics (i.e. gender, disability type) affect retention rates over time?</li> <li>- How do retention rates of CWDs change over time in target schools</li> <li>- What impact do RISE interventions have on the retention rates of CWD, particularly girls, until the end of the project? OR</li> <li>- How effective are RISE interventions on the retention rates of CWD particularly girls, until the end of the project?</li> </ul>
<b>Research Question 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How do the perceptions of household members, school staff and community of CWD change over the life of the project?</li> <li>- What impact do RISE interventions have on the perceptions of Household members, school staff and community on CWD?</li> </ul>
<b>Research Question 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What impact do RISE interventions have on the safety, wellbeing and confidence of CWD, particularly girls?</li> <li>- How do community champions contribute to the safety, wellbeing and confidence of CWD, particularly girls?</li> </ul>
<b>Research Question 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is the policy environment like for education of CWD in the context in which RISE is working?</li> </ul>



## 6. Key Activities, Deliverables and Timelines

The baseline evaluation study is expected to involve three key phases namely:

1. Mel framework & baseline design development
2. Tool development
3. Data analysis, and final report

The study is expected to take at least four months from November 2024 – March 2025.

Deliverable	Date
Create MEL framework	13 December 2024
Create baseline design report	13 December 2024
Data cleaning - Malawi & Rwanda (consultant)	3 February 2025
Data analysis - Malawi & Rwanda	14 February 2025
Data cleaning - Zambia	21 February 2025
Data analysis - Zambia (consultant)	28 February 2025
Initial data share - data dive	6 March 2025
Report draft 1 shared with team	10 March 2025
Final report shared with team	20 March 2025

## 7. Guiding Principles and Values

RISE underscores the important thematic values of Intersectionality, safeguarding and ethical conduct in the implementation of projects including this baseline study.

### Ethical Standards

The consultant is expected to ensure and uphold the following:

**Ethical conduct:** all effort shall be made for the consultant to undertake behavior that aligns with accepted moral principles and standards, acting in a manner that is fair, honest, respectful, and responsible towards others.

**Conflict of Interest:** Researchers should disclose any potential conflicts of interest that may arise from the study, including financial interests, affiliations, or personal relationships that could influence the conduct or outcome of the research. Transparency in reporting and decision-making processes is essential to maintaining the integrity and credibility of the study.

These may not be exhaustive ethical considerations for the research, but by adhering to these ethical considerations, the baseline study aims to uphold the principles of respect, ethical conduct, justice, and integrity, thereby ensuring the welfare and rights of all participants involved.

## 8. Requirements

The consultant must possess the following qualifications and experience. Candidates from Malawi, Rwanda or Zambia are preferred:

Essential	Desirable
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A minimum of 10 years' experience in administering studies, collecting data and producing quality baseline/endline study reports, in education and for international non-profit organizations or multilateral agencies</li> <li>2. Advanced experience in designing baseline and endline studies, including proven experience in sound sampling, gender sensitive research methods, mixed methods approach (quantitative and qualitative)</li> <li>3. Demonstrated experience in tool development</li> <li>4. Demonstrated experience in quantitative and qualitative data analysis</li> <li>5. Excellent knowledge and experience in disability, inclusion and gender equality in the education sector</li> <li>6. Demonstrated capacity to respect and safeguard vulnerable populations</li> <li>7. Fluency in English</li> <li>8. Capacity to set priorities, organize, plan, and production and delivery of high-quality work under tight timeframes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrated knowledge and experience with education policies in Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia will be considered an asset</li> <li>2. Fluency in other relevant languages</li> </ol>

## 9. Proposal Structure and Submission Guidelines

We invite applications from suitably qualified evaluators/researchers to submit proposals for the baseline evaluation. Qualified and interested parties are asked to submit the following:

1. Detailed technical proposal (5 pages maximum) clearly demonstrating a thorough understanding of this ToR, and including the following:
  - a. Description of the capacity and qualifications of the consulting firm, including previous relevant experience.
  - b. Description of the proposed approach and methodology, including baseline design methodology, sampling strategy, data analysis, integration of gender, inclusion and safeguarding considerations and ethical standards and quality assurance.
  - c. A proposed schedule/work plan (i.e. a Gantt chart), including contingency planning for emergencies.
  - d. The level of effort linked to each deliverable.
2. Curriculum Vitae of all proposed team members outlining relevant experience (max 1 page per CV).
3. Financial proposal (in GBP) with a detailed breakdown of costs for the study:
  - a. Itemized consultancy fees/costs.
  - b. Expected payment plan and method.
4. Names and contact information of two referees who can be contacted regarding relevant experience.
5. A sample copy of a previous or similar work undertaken.

All proposals should be submitted electronically to the following email address: [angela@linkeducation.org.uk](mailto:angela@linkeducation.org.uk).

Please submit 2 separate emails: “RISE BL Technical Proposal from ... (name)” and “RISE BL Financial Proposal from .... (name)” indicated in the email title line.

For any further enquires please contact [info@linkeducation.org.uk](mailto:info@linkeducation.org.uk) and indicate “RISE BL enquiry” as part of the email title.

**The deadline for submitting proposals is Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024 by 8am CAT.**

# Appendix 1 – RISE Theory of Change

