

# FACILITY FROM THE REGIONAL TEACHERS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA

## WINDOW 1 – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



#### WHAT IS THIS NEW FACILITY FROM THE REGIONAL TEACHERS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA?

The **Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa (RTIA)**, launched in early 2024, aims to support Sub-Saharan African countries in increasing the availability of qualified and motivated teachers in their schools. This will be achieved through improved working conditions for teachers and enhanced professional development opportunities.

The **Facility from the RTIA** is part of this broader RTIA and is being implemented through a partnership of three EU Member States: France, Belgium, and Finland. Other components of the Regional Teacher Initiative for Africa are led by the African Union Commission and UNESCO.

*\*For more information, refer to the Facility factsheet*

#### WHAT IS THE WINDOW ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE?

The Technical Assistance window consists in the mobilization of expertise to support Sub-Saharan African countries in the design and implementation of system reforms, policies, and capacity building in the area of “Teacher governance” and “Teacher education and professional development”.

#### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE?

Technical Assistance can be generally defined as technical expertise that will be delivered by individual and institutional experts from Europe and Africa. To give sustainability to the action beyond its period of implementation, the Facility will dedicate specific efforts to build institutional partnerships between European and African public institutions.

**WHO CAN APPLY TO BENEFIT FROM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE FACILITY?**

The Facility is an EU contribution to support teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa. The following countries are eligible to benefit from technical assistance provided by the Facility:

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA	WEST AFRICA	SOUTHERN AFRICA
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Burundi</li> <li>2. Cameroon</li> <li>3. Central African Republic</li> <li>4. Congo</li> <li>5. DRC</li> <li>6. Djibouti</li> <li>7. Equatorial Guinea</li> <li>8. Eritrea</li> <li>9. Ethiopia</li> <li>10. Gabon</li> <li>11. Kenya</li> <li>12. Rwanda</li> <li>13. Sao Tome and Principe</li> <li>14. Somalia</li> <li>15. South Sudan</li> <li>16. Sudan</li> <li>17. Tanzania</li> <li>18. Uganda</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Benin</li> <li>2. Burkina Faso</li> <li>3. Cabo Verde</li> <li>4. Chad</li> <li>5. Ivory Coast</li> <li>6. The Gambia</li> <li>7. Ghana</li> <li>8. Guinea</li> <li>9. Guinea-Bissau</li> <li>10. Liberia</li> <li>11. Mali</li> <li>12. Mauretania</li> <li>13. Niger</li> <li>14. Nigeria</li> <li>15. Senegal</li> <li>16. Sierra Leone</li> <li>17. Togo</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Angola</li> <li>2. Botswana</li> <li>3. The Comoros</li> <li>4. Eswatini</li> <li>5. Lesotho</li> <li>6. Madagascar</li> <li>7. Malawi</li> <li>8. Mauritius</li> <li>9. Mozambique</li> <li>10. Namibia</li> <li>11. Seychelles</li> <li>12. South Africa</li> <li>13. Zambia</li> <li>14. Zimbabwe</li> </ol>

**WHO CAN SUBMIT THE REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE?**

In a selected eligible country, the Ministry of Education is the institution entitled to submit a request, either through the Ministry’s cabinet, the General Secretary office, a General Direction of the Ministry, or equivalent. When the country’s work on teachers is part of a more comprehensive public sector reform, requests presented by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Public Reforms or equivalent could be considered eligible.

In practical terms, although a request might be submitted by the technical departments of a Ministry, the request should be endorsed by one of the Ministry’s authorities (the Minister, Assistant Minister, Permanent Secretary or equivalent).

At country level, the technical team in charge of the preparation of the request can look for support from the European Union Delegation (EUD) and should copy the delegation in the submission of their request to the Facility.

## **WHO BENEFITS FROM THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN THE REQUESTING COUNTRY?**

While the Ministry of Education should lead the preparation of the request, it is also expected that other national entities and locally based partners be consulted and involved in the process. If the request preparation is led by one technical department of the MoE, it is expected that they consult with and involve other MoE technical departments as potential beneficiaries of the Country Action Plan.

During the implementation phase of the program (called “country action plan - CAP”), many different national partners can directly or indirectly benefit from the program of technical assistance as implementing partners (refer to the request form), such as: decentralized education services, teacher training institutes, other Ministries, teacher unions, among others. For instance, technical expertise requested by the MoE could directly benefit a national teacher training institute or another ministry such as the Ministry of Finance on budgeting and planning for future teachers’ recruitments.

If another national entity is interested in benefiting from the technical assistance window, they should engage with their Ministry of Education to include their specific needs within the country’s request for technical assistance to the Facility.

## **HOW DO WE PREPARE A REQUEST?**

To prepare a request, you need to use the Country Request Form. This template includes specific guidelines to clarify what type of information is expected in each section.

You also have the option to contact the European Union Delegation in your country. They should be available to assist you or channel your questions to the right person. Another option is to send your questions directly to:

[requests@rtia-facility.eu](mailto:requests@rtia-facility.eu)

## **WHAT IS A COUNTRY ACTION PLAN UNDER THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WINDOW?**

A Country Action Plan (CAP) is a set of coherent actions (work packages) of technical assistance that can cover a period of 12 to 24 months, leads to targeted changes, and is built in dialogue with the requesting Ministry of Education. A CAP is developed on the foundations of the national education sector plan (ESP) and teacher policy (if available or under development). CAPs are co-developed between the Facility Implementation Team (FIT) and the national partner (Ministry of Education), in consultation with other national and international partners.

## WHEN IS IT POSSIBLE TO SUBMIT A TA REQUEST?

At any time during the year. While the Facility advertises the TA window a few times during the year, the period for request submission remains open all the time, meaning that countries will be able to submit a request at any time of the year. The requests are analyzed on a rolling basis.

## WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES DOES THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WINDOW OF THE FACILITY FINANCE?

The first thing to consider is whether the proposed request addresses teachers-related issues only, and more specifically in the areas of teacher policy and governance, and teacher education and professional development. The second thing is to ensure that proposed actions and activities relate to the education levels covered by the Facility, which goes from pre-school to lower secondary. Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the Facility mainly finances the provision of technical expertise (as well as the costs associated with experts' mobilization; see below).

Requests for technical assistance on broader education issues (not directly linked to teachers) will not be financed (please refer to the areas covered by the Facility in the request form). Requests for equipment, investments or national recurring expenditures in the country will not be financed either.

All activities related to the implementation of the technical assistance such as experts travels, accommodation, translation in some cases, knowledge products dissemination, and any other costs directly associated with activities will be covered by the Facility.

To make sure that the expertise benefits the country and contributes to national capacity building, the national counterpart is expected to contribute through the availability and participation of relevant public officials in the CAP preparation and implementation. When other sources of funding are available for the national counterpart, they might be used to complement the resources of the Facility and contribute to the implementation of the whole action.

## CONCRETELY, WHAT TYPES OF EXPENSES ARE ELIGIBLE UNDER THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WINDOW?

The Technical Assistance Window only finances technical expertise provided either by institutions or individuals, as well as editing/printing, translation, knowledge products, experts' travel and other costs that are directly linked to the successful provision of the expertise. All other costs are not eligible and should not be included in the request.

As part of CAP activities, public officials may be mobilized to participate to working sessions, workshops and training and dedicate time to contribute to the implementation of activities, among others. The costs related to such mobilization are expected to be covered by the requesting country.

To optimize costs and foster in-house collaboration, the Facility will also gently request Partner Countries to make meeting rooms available for the technical expertise to be delivered whenever the conditions allow it; and that, as far as possible, working sessions and workshops happen within the facilities of Ministries of Education and/or other public entities.

Examples of non-eligible costs: long-term resident experts, large program roll-out, per diem to participate to local workshops, participation to seminars/conferences, study tours, certifications, higher education degrees, infrastructure, equipment, etc.

### **WITHIN OUR EDUCATION SECTOR PLAN OR OUR TEACHER POLICY (OR ANY OTHER NATIONAL DOCUMENT), WE HAVE IDENTIFIED SEVERAL LINES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WHICH ARE NOT YET FINANCED. WOULD THESE LINES BE ELIGIBLE TO THE FACILITY?**

Absolutely. There is no automatic commitment by the Facility to finance these lines but they would definitively be considered if you identify them in your request and if they relate directly to teachers' issues.

### **DOES THE FACILITY FINANCE THE ROLL-OUT OR IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES?**

No, the Facility only finances the design and development of training programs and can finance up to the training of trainers, not the roll-out of teacher training programs at scale.

### **IS THERE A RESOURCE CEILING FOR THE REQUEST?**

The technical assistance window of the Facility is opened to 49 SSA countries, with the objective to work with at least 25 Sub-Saharan African countries per three-year cycle. Although there is no specific resource allocation per Country Action Plan (CAP), the Facility is aiming at a fair distribution of resources between eligible countries.

On the basis of these principles, it is expected that a CAP materializes into a total of 200 to 400 days of expertise, up to 500 days if properly justified. CAP with a number of days of expertise likely falling between 100 and 200 days of expertise will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Below an estimated amount of 100 days of expertise, you might be invited to revisit your request and develop it a step further.

### **ARE THE RESOURCES DIRECTLY MANAGED BY THE REQUESTING COUNTRY?**

No, the Facility has an administrative and financial team dedicated to the management of the overall Facility resources, including the management of the resources allocated to the delivery of technical assistance.

### **WHAT IS THE TIMEFRAME OF THE FACILITY?**

The Facility started operating in February 2024 for an initial period of 3 years. The Technical Assistance Window will open on April 29th 2024 and shall remain open until the end of the implementation period (end of 2026).

### **WHAT IS THE PERIOD OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR MY REQUEST?**

A CAP should have a period of implementation of 12 to 24 months. Note that once a CAP has been thoroughly and successfully implemented, the country will have the possibility to present a new request while closing the previous one.

### **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE REQUEST IS SENT?**

Our team of experts will analyze your request, as well as all the annexed documentation, and contact the focal points who have been identified in the request as soon as possible to complement and confirm the information received (usually within 30 days). Once your request is approved, our technical team will propose a roadmap for the development of the CAP. The general sequence is as follows:

1. Follow-up call by the Facility team to the focal points identified in the request, as a complement to the desk review of the submitted documentation
2. Formal response of the Facility to the request
3. Planning for the CAP development, generally involving the planning of a one-week in-country mission by the Facility team
4. CAP drafting by the FIT from the dialogue with the requesting departments, as well as other national and international partners
5. CAP validation by both parties (the country authorities and the Facility management)
6. Expertise TOR development
7. CAP implementation materialized by the deployment of experts
8. Joint CAP bi-annual reviews

### **CAN A UNITED NATIONS AGENCY OR A BILATERAL PARTNER BECOME AN IMPLEMENTING PARTNER OR A PROVIDER OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE?**

No. UN agencies and bilateral partners cannot be considered as service providers under the Facility. They can partner with the Facility in several ways, though: especially through joint policy dialogue and activities parallel and/or complementary to those implemented within the CAPs. UNESCO for instance is already a partner of the overall Regional Teacher Initiative for Africa.