

## **FACILITY FROM THE REGIONAL TEACHERS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING EDUCATION POLICIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN HR POLICY MINISTRY OF BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION THE GAMBIA Expertise: International consultant**

#### **SUMMARY TABLE**

Corresponding CAP technical area	Teachers' governance <b>HR and teacher policies</b>
Corresponding CAP main action and activity	Situational analysis on the existing education policies and Development of an HR policy
Impacted CAP indicator	ESSP Result area 4: Effective planning, development and management of human resources ensured. # 14: Develop and implement an operational policy on HR
Impacted Facility indicator	Outcome 1. # of RTIA engaged countries implementing new or revised policies, processes or tools related to teacher governance or management
Intended period of implementation	January – September 2026
Total expected number of days	55
Expected key deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Report on education policies situational analysis</li><li>• Report on education HR policies best practices (benchmark)</li><li>• Technical note and PP presentation on the HR policy development process and format</li><li>• HR policy</li><li>• HR policy operationalization plan</li><li>• Sensitization/ capacity building modules on the HR policy</li><li>• Technical memo documenting the HR policy development process</li></ul>
National implementing partner (Unit in charge of interaction with the experts)	Human Resources Directorate - MoBSE

#### **THE REGIONAL TEACHERS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA**

The Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa (RTIA), a programme funded by the EU/EC via the Education section (G3) of DG INTPA aims to improve learning outcomes and the socio-emotional development of children in Africa, by having a more competent, motivated and inclusive teacher workforce in basic education.

The RTIA will especially seek to achieve the following outcomes over the next 6 years:

1. Improve the governance, management, attractiveness, and gender balance of the teaching profession, with a strong focus on increased digitalisation and innovation.
2. Enhance the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of initial and continuous teacher professional development, notably through digital education, peer-to-peer learning approaches and regional collaboration.

Within RTIA, the Regional Facility for Teachers in Africa (RFTA) will support teacher policy and improve teacher education and professional development systems by i) providing capacity building at country level through technical assistance, ii) promoting innovation and scaling of effective teaching solutions; iii) increasing the production and use of data and evidence, and iv) promoting the use of regional frameworks, evidence-based practices, and joint learning at regional level.

The Facility from the Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa (The Facility) will reach the above-mentioned objectives through 3 types of instruments or “windows”: i) a window to deliver technical assistance on teacher governance and teacher education and professional development based on the demand from eligible partner countries, ii) a window on testing and scaling effective programs for teacher education and professional development in the thematic areas of digital skills, gender, green skills, and pedagogical skills, including in the context of refugees and displaced population, iii) a research window to create new evidence and support the integration of evidence in the policy making process and in the design of teacher education and professional development programs.

In addition to these windows the Facility’s knowledge management and communication activities will further contribute to the sharing of knowledge, evidence, and best practices related to the overall Initiative outcomes.

The Facility is funded by the European Union and co-implemented by the Partnership formed by three-member state agencies: Expertise France for France, Enabel for Belgium, EDUFI for Finland. Expertise France has been designated the Coordinating Agency for this Partnership. With the Facility governance scheme serving as the Initiative’s governance scheme, it is expected that the Partnership will work closely with UNESCO and AUC, in charge of the other 2 components of the EU Initiative.

## **GENERAL CONTEXT IN THE COUNTRY**

As of mid-2025, The Gambia’s population is estimated at 2.82 million people, with around 45% falling within the school-age bracket of 4 to 18 years. This youthful demographic underscores an urgent need for expanded school infrastructure and a larger, well-trained teaching workforce.

Investing in education is a key pillar of the Gambia’s National Development Plan 2023–2027. The Gambia Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) has made significant strides in expanding school enrolment. The introduction of the ‘fee-free policy’ and the provision of school grants have improved education coverage, resulting in near-universal access to basic schooling. This progress is largely attributed to the expansion of school infrastructure, improved facilities, and the deployment of newly trained teachers nationwide associated with an increase in public expenditure on education.

The education system is structured into 3 years of early childhood education (ECE), 6 years of lower basic education (LBE), 3 years of upper basic education (UBE), and 3 years of senior secondary education (SSE). According to the Gambian Education Statistics 2024/2025; 148, 299 children are enrolled in ECE; 442,901 children in LBE, 144,964 in UBE and 94,731 in SSE.

However, challenges remain. Enrollment rates for children with special needs continue to lag behind, highlighting persistent gaps in inclusive education. Moreover, improving the quality of education—particularly at the foundational level—has proven difficult. The 2023 Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) revealed a deeply rooted learning crisis in foundational literacy showing alarmingly high rates of zero scores and low reading fluency.

Recognizing the key role of teachers in promoting learning in the classroom, MoBSE has tripled the number of qualified teachers from 4,600 in 2000 to 13,300 in 2023. Measures such as hardship allowances intend to support teachers’ deployment in remote areas. However, the lack of HR policy

undermines transparency and accountability in regard to teachers' recruitment, deployment and promotion, with a negative impact on teachers' morale and retention. MoBSE identified the development and implementation of an HR policy as one of their top priorities.

The Education Sector Strategic Plan (2016–2030) outlines a bold vision to professionalize the Gambia's teaching workforce. Central to this effort is the development of a Teacher Competency Framework, which defines career pathways and expected competencies at each level, alongside a comprehensive teacher policy. These initiatives have yet to be fully operationalized.

In-service teachers' capacity building through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs remains heavily dependent on financial support from development partners. Coordination of CPD initiatives and capture of corresponding data are lacking. MoBSE is planning to pilot a platform developed by Owl Technology by the end of 2025. Teachers are expected to be key users of the platform, to apply online for vacant positions and transfer, and to access information on/ apply for capacity building opportunities. The launch of the platform will contribute to the efforts to increase transparency and accountability in teachers' governance and continuous professional development.

## **CAP CONTEXT – ARTICULATION WITH PREVIOUS WORKS**

The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) in the Gambia sent a request for technical assistance to the RTIA Facility in April 2025. Following the approval of the request, two experts from the RTIA Facility went to Banjul in October 2025 to co-develop the Country Action Plan (CAP) with directors and technicians of the MoBSE, and representatives of the teachers' unions and education partners. During this mission, the technical areas and the thematics presented in the request were adjusted. The CAP components cover both teachers' governance and teachers' education and professional development. The development of an HR policy, the operationalization of the teacher policy and support provided to the implementation of the HR platform will contribute to enhancing transparency and effectiveness of the teaching force management. A STEAM component, including the development of a policy and a teacher competency framework, intends to anchor 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in the whole education cycle. Finally, the operationalization of the teacher competency framework and the revision of a mentoring program for newly qualified teachers aim at facilitating the transition between pre-service and in-service, and articulating teachers' professional development and career development around the acquisition of core competencies.

This process of experts' recruitment starts after the CAP has been validated by the MoBSE and the Facility management.

## **MAIN OBJECTIVES**

The Gambia's priority reform: *Accessible, Equitable, and Inclusive Foundational Learning*, aims at achieving high learning and skills outcomes, with more than 80 percent of the children reaching the minimum learning competencies and standards in line with the National Education Policy 2016 – 2030. Recruitment of qualified teachers and in-service training and teacher professional development are core components of the reform.

As such, the CAP activities are aligned with national priorities in the education sector, and the technical assistance (TA) will contribute to several ESSP (Education Sector Strategic Plan) 2016-2030 indicators. The components on teachers' governance (HR policy and operationalization of the teacher policy) intend to foster enhanced planning and management of human resources and will directly contribute to the ESSP Result area 4, Sector management program: ***Effective planning, development and management of human resources ensured***. It will specifically address # 14: *Develop and implement an operational policy on HR*.

### Specific objectives

Consultations in country during the CAP development, both with MoBSE and international partners, highlighted the necessity to undertake a ***policy situational analysis***, mainly because of a lack of visibility on existing policy documents, their status, their level of implementation and their relevance in line with the education reform. The main objective of this activity is to nurture the development of the

HR policy, but also to identify potential duplications, build on what is already existing and ensure that the different policy documents are aligned and relevant to the education reform implementation.

The key action, identified by MoBSE as their first priority, is the co-development of an **HR policy**. The process intends to be participatory, and to include the relevant directions, partners, and teachers' union representatives. The same involvement will take place for co-developing the operationalization plan, which will include roles and responsibilities, sensitization and communication plans, monitoring tools, and, if needed, capacity building modules for implementers.

A team of international and national experts will work together to bring the relevant expertise in the areas of education policy analysis and development, in HR policy development (for the education sector) and in policy monitoring and evaluation.

If the main outcome of this consultancy is the policy itself, its development process should be designed carefully, to ensure relevance and ownership of national stakeholders. Implementation considerations should be embedded in this process from the very beginning, and a realistic implementation plan developed.

As such, the mission aims at providing technical assistance for both

- conducting an analysis of existing education policies (with a focus on teachers)
- the development of an HR policy
- and the development of the HR policy's implementation plan.

## **STAKEHOLDERS**

The HRD (Human Resources Directorate) will be the lead implementing partner for this component on teachers' governance focusing on the development of an HR policy.

Other stakeholders include other departments and directions of the MoBSE, GTU (Gambia Teachers' Union) and representatives from decentralized education services, the regional education directorates. Consultations with education partners and EUD are also key, to take into account past and current initiatives in the education sector, in particular in the area of education policies' development and implementation.

## **MAIN DELIVERABLES**

The main deliverables for this consultancy include:

### **I. Situational analysis of education policies (desk review) – international expert**

Deliverable 1: Short inception report

This inception report includes an outline of the work to be carried out for this analysis (no longer than 2 pages).

Deliverable 2: Presentation PP to the core technical group

This presentation will enable the core group to confirm the list of policies and draft policies identified, and to provide inputs for the recommendations to be in the report.

Deliverable 3: study report

The report will include an analysis of the education policies (related to teachers): alignment with the education reform, potential duplications, status (validated or not, implemented or not), potential gaps and recommendations for the development of the HR policy and the review of the teacher policy.

### **II. Development of an HR policy and its implementation plan – international and national experts**

Deliverable 4: Inception report – lead: international expert

This inception report includes an outline of the work to be carried out for the development of the HR policy and its implementation plan (no longer than 3-4 pages). The international expert will agree with the national expert on respective tasks and responsibilities to be included in this report.

Deliverable 5: Report on best practices (benchmark) – lead: international expert

This report is based on a benchmark of education HR policies in Africa and globally, it will highlight best practices and include recommendations for the development of MoBSE HR policy.

Deliverable 6: Technical note and PP presentation to the core technical group (methodology and format) – lead: international expert

This presentation aims for the core group to validate the methodology (process) for the development of the HR policy, as well as the proposed policy format.

Deliverable 7: HR policy – lead: international expert

This is the key deliverable – it might need several drafts. The process (defined in the technical note) is based on working sessions with the relevant stakeholders (core technical group identified with MoBSE). The official validation of the HR policy is the responsibility of MoBSE focal points.

Deliverable 8: Operationalization plan – co-leads: international and national experts

Once the HR policy validated, the operationalization plan co-developed with the core technical group will include roles and responsibilities in the implementation, a communication strategy, a timeframe, a monitoring plan, tools for an annual review. Each expert will lead on the components corresponding to his/her areas of expertise.

Deliverable 9: Sensitization/ capacity building modules - co-leads: international and national experts

Based on the operationalization plan, these modules might target different education stakeholders, with different objectives: information/ sensitization or capacity building. The national expert will lead on the monitoring and evaluation component.

Deliverable 10: Technical memo documenting the HR policy development process – lead: international expert

This memo is an internal document for learning purpose for the Facility and MoBSE.

Deliverable 11: Mission final report (for the Facility) – both experts

## **GENERAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

The general approach and methodology described below are indicative and non-exclusive. The expert must develop the methodology he/she intends to use in his/her application.

### General approach:

The international expert will work closely with the MoBSE and a national expert. Consultation and coordination between the two experts will be expected throughout the consultancy, to define the division of tasks, harmonize schedules and joint interaction with national counterparts in the MoBSE, decentralized directorates, teachers' unions and education partners. If collaboration and co-development are expected for producing the different deliverables, it is suggested that each expert takes the lead on specific components building on their expertise and previous experience.

A participatory approach with the MoBSE partners is essential, to ensure that what is proposed is in line with their needs. They will be the ones guiding the process, identifying and involving relevant stakeholders, and taking responsibility for the validation processes.

### Methodology:

To carry out this work, the expert recruited must:

- Carry out a desk review and an analysis of the main policy documents of the Gambian education system
- Carry out a desk review of existing HR policies in the education sector in Africa
- Participate in a scoping meeting with the MoBSE focal points, the national expert and the Facility. Following this meeting, the expert will propose a brief note describing the work to be carried out, including the methodology and an updated timetable taking into account logistical constraints, particularly those related to travel. This note will describe precisely the specific and respective responsibilities of the national expert and the international expert.
- Facilitate working sessions with national stakeholders with the objective to define the HR policy development process

- Develop and present a concept note on the HR policy development process, for validation of the education authorities
- Based on the validated process, facilitate working sessions with the identified core technical group to develop the policy format and components
- After validation by the education authorities, co-facilitate with the national expert working sessions with the MoBSE and relevant stakeholders to develop the policy implementation plan.
- Based on the validated operationalization plan, the two experts will develop relevant tools and modules to be used for the implementation of the HR policy.

The whole process aims to be owned by the MoBSE. Consultations, technical exchanges and feedback take place before the finalization and submission of the deliverables. Even if a consensus among stakeholders might not be reached at each step, creating a safe space for discussion is key to ensure national ownership of both the process and the final product.

Throughout the consultancy, the two experts are expected to have technical discussions with the Facility. The deliverables will be validated by the MoBSE and the Facility.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The MoBSE is responsible for:**

- Providing all the documentation required for the desk review and the preparation of the field work if any
- Facilitating the organization of meetings with relevant stakeholders
- Facilitating the validation process by the national authorities
- Commenting on and approving deliverables.

### **The RTIA Facility is responsible for:**

- Contracting and facilitating the integration of the expert by providing all available documents and resources
- Supporting and monitoring the expert's work from start to finish
- Acting as the expert's main resource person
- Ensuring quality control of deliverables in collaboration with the NTC's focal points
- Acknowledging final validation of deliverables by all parties
- Evaluating the expert's overall performance under this mandate.

### **The expert is responsible for:**

- Reviewing and commenting on these Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Ensuring that all deliverables comply with the guidelines set out at the scoping meeting, in line with the agreed timetable
- Informing the Facility immediately of any difficulties encountered in implementing the mission
- Ensuring that stakeholders are consulted throughout the assignment
- Behaving with the highest level of personal integrity and committing to the required standards of conduct.

## **EXPERTS' PROFILES**

### **Academic qualification:**

Advanced degree in education policy, HR, or related field

### **General work experience:**

Minimum of 10 years of experience in education policy, and/or in teachers' governance – in particular HR management; proven experience in implementing HR policies in the education or public service sector

### **Specific work experience:**

Experience in/ knowledge of developing or updating HR policies in the education sector; Proven knowledge and experience of education policies and systems in West Africa, and the Gambia in particular

**Language Proficiency:**

Excellent proficiency in English (both written and spoken);

Knowledge of French (advantageous but not required)

**Interpersonal and soft skills and experience**

Excellent communication and presentation abilities

Ability to work collaboratively with stakeholders from various backgrounds, including government officials, educators, and technical experts

High adaptability and flexibility in dynamic environments

**Additional assets**

Previous experience working in the Gambia

Familiarity with the education context and policies of the Gambia

## ESTIMATED NUMBER OF DAYS & GENERAL TIMELINE

The consultancy is planned to take place between January and September 2026 – with the following tentative schedule: - situational analysis of education policies: January-February; development of the HR policy: March-May; HR policy implementation plan: June-September. Several missions will take place in the Gambia during the consultancy. The total number of days is estimated at 55 for the international expert.

	Preparation	On-site work	Distance work (including drafting deliverable)	Total
<b>International expert</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>55</b>
National expert	1	9		10
<b>Total experts</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>65</b>

## HOW TO APPLY & SELECTION PROCESS

[*Guidelines.* For individual expertise, please specify in the paragraph below, the email's subject that applicants should use to make it easier to process application. For institutional call for proposals, please provide more detailed information on the type of information that is expected and general selection process]

Please attach your CV (following [Europass template](#) and a one-page cover letter. In the subject of your email, please specify "[COUNTRY] – [ASSIGNMENT]". Note: if you do not do so, your application might not be considered".

If possible, please attach a sample of previous works that are similar to the above assignment (1 to 3 work samples; extracts of entire deliverables accepted). In each case, you should specify your role (main author, major contributions, minor contributions, etc.)

*"At RFTA we value all experts as unique individuals, and we welcome the variety of experiences they bring to the Facility. As such, we have a strict non-discrimination policy. We believe everyone should be treated equally regardless of race, sex, gender identification, sexual orientation, national origin, native language, religion, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other characteristic protected by law. If you feel that you have been discriminated against, please let the RFTA team know as soon as possible. Every complaint will be appropriately investigated"*

