

## FACILITY FROM THE REGIONAL TEACHERS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA

### TERMS OF REFERENCE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPACITY BUILDING MODULES FOR TEACHER PORTAL USERS MINISTRY OF BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION THE GAMBIA Expertise: National consultant

#### SUMMARY TABLE

Corresponding CAP technical area	Teachers' governance <b>MoBSE teacher portal implementation</b>
Corresponding CAP main action and activity	Capacity building of essential users of the platform
Impacted CAP indicator	ESSP Result area 4: Effective planning, development and management of human resources ensured. <i>Improve HR system to enhance transparency and accountability.</i>
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	March - May 2026
Total expected number of days	40
Expected key deliverables	Development of guidelines/ tutorials for essential identified users of the teacher portal (head masters, principals, teachers... except MoBSE teams)
National implementing partner (Unit in charge of interaction with the experts)	Human Resources Directorate - MoBSE

#### THE REGIONAL TEACHERS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA

The Regional Teacher 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 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 in 2026. 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 teacher portal 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 under teachers' governance (HR policy, operationalization of the teacher policy and support to the implementation of the teacher portal) 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***. The launch of the teacher portal more specifically will contribute to *Improving HR system to enhance transparency and accountability*.

### Specific objectives

The key action, identified by MoBSE, aims at ensuring a smooth implementation of the teacher portal through a wide sensitization of users in the country. The main objective is for key users, such as head masters, principals and teachers themselves, to gain ownership of the platform and become fully confident in using it.

The action needs to be implemented in coordination with the MoBSE, the service providers and the users themselves. The expert will develop simple tutorials and guidelines, and/or training contents per user category, taking into account the discrepancies in connectivity between regions and different levels of capacities in internet navigation and use of similar platforms among identified users.

## STAKEHOLDERS

The HRD (Human Resources Directorate) will be the lead implementing partner for this component and responsible for ensuring smooth interactions and collaboration with the service providers.

Other stakeholders include representatives from the regional education directorates, head masters, principals and teachers. It is quite important for teachers to be able to navigate the platform, as, among other uses, this will be the only way to apply for transfer in the future.

## **MAIN DELIVERABLES**

The main deliverables for this consultancy include:

### Deliverable 1: Inception report

The inception report includes an outline of the work to be carried out for developing the guidelines/tutorials for identified users (no longer than 3-4 pages). It should reflect the process and timelines.

### Deliverable 2: Capacity building modules per category of users

Based on the users' profiles and actual use of the platform, capacity building modules are co-developed in the format of tutorials for each category of users. Simple guidelines will also be edited and shared online.

### Deliverable 3: Final version of training materials

The expert, together with the MoBSE, will conduct a pilot of the developed tutorials and guidelines. Based on the feedback collected during the pilot, adjustments will be made (if necessary) and final versions of the tutorials and guidelines produced.

### Deliverable 4: Mission final report (for the Facility).

## **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 national expert will work closely with the MoBSE and the service providers, to ensure complementary and alignment with the planned phased implementation of the platform.

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, giving access to the platform, facilitating meetings with the service providers and the platform users, and validating the tutorials and guidelines.

### Methodology:

To carry out this work, the expert recruited must:

- Carry out a desk review of the main policy documents of the Gambian education system
- Participate in a scoping meeting with the MoBSE focal points, 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.
- Engage with the service providers and navigate the teacher portal to capture the key entry points, and analyse key actions per type of users.
- Based on this analysis, develop simple tutorials and guidelines
- Collect feedback from a small sample of users on the tutorials and guidelines and adjust accordingly (if necessary)
- Deliver the final versions of tutorials and guidelines to the MoBSE for the service providers to upload them on the platform.

Throughout the consultancy, the expert is 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

- Facilitating the organization of meetings with relevant stakeholders (including the service providers)
- Facilitating the validation process of the tutorials/ guidelines
- 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 MoBSE 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' PROFILE

**Academic qualification:**

Computer science / developer expert

**General work experience:**

Minimum of 7 years of experience in platform development, and/or online teaching/ capacity building; proven experience in developing tutorials, guidelines and tools for platform and online services' users

**Specific work experience:**

Experience in/ knowledge of education platforms/ teachers portals

**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**

Familiarity with the education context and policies of the Gambia

## ESTIMATED NUMBER OF DAYS & GENERAL TIMELINE

The consultancy is planned to take place between March and May 2026 for a total number of 40 days).

	Preparation	Consultations and development of contents	Pilot	Total
National expert	2	30	8	40

## HOW TO APPLY & SELECTION PROCESS

1. 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”.
2. A technical note explaining the assignment, detailing the methodology used and a description of the implementation (maximum 10 pages). It must be written in English, and should be presented in A4 format, Times New Roman 12 font, 1.5 line spacing and sent in Word format.
3. 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.).

Please note that the Facility applies its own daily rate in accordance with the current compensation grid. In this respect, fees will be calculated on the basis of the candidate's status and experience.

The evaluation of the tenders received will be based on particular the following criteria: 1) the candidate's academic qualification 2) the candidate's experience in carrying out assignments that are relevant or similar to those specified in this call for applications 3) the candidate's understanding of the expectations of the assignment and the proposed intervention methodology.

According to the Facility's definition, a national expert responds to an open call for expertise on the national market. A national expert is generally a national of the country, The Gambia, in which the technical assistance is deployed or a resident with a legal work permit in the country. Salaries and benefits are based on the local market and paid in local currency.

*“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”*