



## **Needs Assessment Consultants - Sierra Leone**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **About Seed Global Health**

Seed Global Health (Seed) envisions a world in which every country, strengthened by a robust health workforce, is able to meet the health needs of its population. Seed's mission is to educate a rising generation of health professionals to strengthen access to quality care with a goal of saving lives, strengthening health systems and improving health.

Seed focuses on strengthening the education, practice, and policy of the local professional health workforce in Africa. Seed's core strategy and primary entry point centers on placing skilled and qualified educators at partner institutions for a minimum of one academic year. Seed also supports educators and partner institutions through a diverse and complementary package of services aimed at advancing health professional education in the classroom and clinical setting. By investing in long-term partnerships for improved health professional education, we help to create a stronger, more sustainable health workforce that is both locally led and better able to meet local health needs.

Seed has forged meaningful and trusted partnerships and demonstrated significant impact in strengthening health systems through human resource for health capacity. With a unique focus on education and training, Seed has already helped train more than 16,000 health professionals in close partnership with in-country colleagues. For more information, please visit [www.seedglobalhealth.org](http://www.seedglobalhealth.org)

#### **About Seed in Sierra Leone**

Seed Global Health is exploring opportunities to support efforts to reduce the high rates of maternal and neonatal mortality in Sierra Leone through improved education and clinical training of healthcare providers. To inform this work in Sierra Leone, Seed is conducting a focused rapid needs assessment with the aim to better understand midwifery clinical training at health facilities in the country from the perspectives of midwifery students, recent midwifery graduates, clinical preceptors, midwifery school staff, district health management teams, and health facility staff.

#### **Consultant Scope of Work**

Seed Global Health seeks a team of consultants to support this mixed-methods needs assessment on midwifery training in Sierra Leone. Specifically, data collection would involve:

- Site visits to all four Schools of Midwifery: School of Midwifery Freetown, School of Midwifery Makeni, School of Midwifery Bo, and the College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences in Freetown. At each school:
  - Conduct interviews with 1-2 individuals;
  - Conduct paper-based surveys with approximately 50 individuals; and,
  - Conduct one focus group.
- Site visits to 6-8 districts. Districts will include: Western Area Urban, Bo, Bombali, Kenema, Moyamba, Port Loko, with the possibility of including one or two of the following: Western Area Rural, Bonthe, Kailahun, Kono. In each district:
  - Site visits to approximately 1 regional or district hospital and 2-3 community health centers. At each health facility:
    - Conduct interviews;
    - Conduct review of records; and,
    - Conduct paper-based surveys.
- Additional 4-5 focus group discussions, to be convened at central locations.

Seed's study team includes staff based both in Boston and in Freetown to support the program management and measurement aspects of the needs assessment. To date, the team has completed a comprehensive desk review on maternal health and midwifery training in Sierra Leone, developed the data collection instruments, and designed the initial methodology. The Seed study team has also applied for Institutional Review Board approval both in the US and in Sierra Leone. It is expected that the consultant team will provide feedback and help further refine the data collection instruments and methodology. Once exemption or approval is granted from both IRB committees, the consultants and study team will work together to begin participant engagement and recruitment, scheduling of site visits, and other preparations. Throughout the contract, the team of consultants will have ongoing communication, coordination, and collaboration with the Seed study team, including regular calls with the team and meetings with the Program Coordinator.

The consultancy involves the following components:

### **Part 1: Preparation**

- Familiarize with the desk and document review that were conducted by Seed
- Review, provide feedback, and finalize the data collection tools and methodology
- Work with Program Coordinator on identification and recruitment of all participants
- Schedule site visits and draft timeline for data collection
- Prepare all necessary logistics and supplies for travel

### **Part 2: Data Collection**

- Conduct data collection, including surveys, focus groups discussions, interviews, and health facility data review
- Conduct ongoing data quality validation

- Ensure data protection according to IRB-approved data protection, storage, and monitoring protocols
- Ongoing communication and sharing of data collected with study team

### **Part 3: Analysis and Reporting**

- Transfer data from paper surveys into Excel document (includes cleaning of data)
- Transcribe the focus group discussions and interviews, as necessary

#### *In tandem with Seed Study Team:*

- Conduct descriptive analysis of survey data
- Conduct thematic analysis of qualitative data
- Draft final report of findings

### **Timeline**

This consultancy is expected to begin in mid-February 2020 and take approximately 2 months, ending April 2020. The study team expects the data collection period to take approximately 3 weeks, during which a full-time team is necessary. Before and after the collection period, the consultant team will support the preparation, data analysis, and reporting, as described above.

### **Deliverables**

The consultant team will report to Seed's Program Coordinator in Sierra Leone. They will also work in close collaboration with Seed's Boston-based team, including clinicians, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) team and other partners, as needed.

The consultant team will submit the following deliverables (in English):

- A timeline and data collection schedule to be agreed upon with the Program Coordinator at the start of the consultancy
- The lists and all relevant documents used for identification and recruitment of participants
- A final plan that describes the data collection approach, including the timeline, methodology, and final instruments
- All raw quantitative and qualitative data, including all paper and electronic surveys, notes from qualitative sessions, etc.
- A cleaned Excel sheet with responses from each of the paper surveys
- A final and comprehensive report of the findings, including summary of data collection period (and challenges) and discussion/recommendations from findings (in tandem with Seed study team)

### **Consultant Qualifications**

The Seed study team suggests at least two two-person teams work in parallel to support the data collection. It is important there is a balance of clinical and technical expertise on the team to both navigate the health facility site visits as well as conduct the data collection. While flexible

and open to changes, the Seed team suggests the consultant team consist of two midwives and two measurement experts. The individuals should have the following characteristics:

### **Midwife Advisor**

- In-depth knowledge of the midwifery education and training landscape in Sierra Leone
- Strong knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analysis techniques
- Demonstrated knowledge or experience working in public health and thinking critically at a health systems level (MSc in Public Health is a bonus)
- Excellent analytical, writing and synthesis skills

### **Measurement Specialist**

- Extensive experience in research and/or M&E in the Sierra Leone context
- Strong knowledge of and experience in both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analysis techniques (surveys, focus groups, and in-depth interviews)
- Demonstrated experience conducting similar research, from start to finish (design, development, collection, analysis and reporting)
- Excellent analytical, writing and synthesis skills
- Experience in logistical support (or if a firm, sufficient office support and logistical infrastructure) to operationalize and carry out this assessment and ensure timely deliverables

### **Submitting a Proposal**

Seed Global Health invites proposals from consultant teams, firms, or other organizations, with the experience and skills described above.

Interested consultants are invited to submit a 5-7-page to [sierraleone@seedglobalhealth.org](mailto:sierraleone@seedglobalhealth.org) by **Friday, January 29th, 2020**. This expression of interest should include:

- A cover letter introducing the consultant team and how the various skills, competencies, and tasks described above will be met, with concrete examples
- A description of the consultants/team/firm, including expertise and experience with similar projects
- A 1-page CV for each team member
- An initial budget outline including expenses for staffing (time allocation and hourly rates) and estimations for transportation, lodging, and other anticipated expenses
- A relevant writing sample that reflects the work of the consultant and their team on a previous similar activity
- 2 references

If you have questions or inquiries, please email [sierraleone@seedglobealth.org](mailto:sierraleone@seedglobealth.org). Please note that applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.