

Terms of Reference for Baseline Evaluation

Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP) Phase II
July 2021



PROJECT SUMMARY

Type of evaluation	Baseline
Name of the project	Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP) Phase II
Project start and end dates	Start date: 01 May 2021 End date (): 30 April 2024
Project duration	36 months
Project locations:	Sudan (Blue Nile, Khartoum, South Kordofan, and the Red Sea States)
Thematic areas	Education
Sub themes	Basic Education
Donor	EC DEVCO - International Cooperation and Development (European Commission)
Estimated beneficiaries	62,595 students (31,923 boys, 30,672 girls).
Overall objective of the project	To fulfil the right to education and improve the basic education sector in Sudan, with particular attention to the most marginalized groups living in vulnerable situations, including migrants, IDPs, and refugees, especially girls as well as children with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION

These Terms of Reference outline the Baseline study for the EQUIP Phase 2 project called ‘Education Quality Improvement Program in Sudan (EQUIP 2)’. The project aims to fulfil the right to education and improve the basic education sector in Sudan, with particular attention to the most marginalized groups living in vulnerable situations, including migrants, IDPs, and refugees, especially girls as well as children with disabilities.

Initially, the project was meant to start the implementation in February 2021, however, due to contractual reasons with the donor, it started on the 1st of May 2021. A comprehensive baseline study is planned at the beginning of the project with the objectives of:

- I. Verifying the secondary data and the consultation findings, particularly concerning data of IDPs and refugees;
- II. Set baseline values against each of the indicators proposed by the project;
- III. Undertake a qualitative assessment concerning key stakeholders, and to develop an in-depth understating of issues of the targeted project beneficiaries;

This document provides information about the project background, targeted localities in four states, the intended methodology and timeframes for its implementations.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

About three million school-aged children are deprived of the right to education by being out of school. This is attributed to many underlying causes that hinder access including poverty, insecurity and social norms. Out-of-school children are at risk of abuse, exploitative labour, and early marriage, among other protection concerns. Children with disabilities are among the most vulnerable in this group. With an estimated 15% of people with disabilities of the total population, approximately 450,000 are out-of-school children living with a form of disability. Although the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) in primary education has been increasing during the last years, reaching 72.5%, there is still considerable variation between States and between urban and rural areas, between girls' and boys' enrolment, and between conflict and non-conflict States.

COVID-19 is having a severe impact on Sudan's education that resulted in a significant interruption of schools' attendance.

From November 2017 to November 2020, Save the Children has been implementing EQUIP1 in two states, South Kordofan (Abujibiha and Elirrie), and Red Sea State (Agig, Swakin, and Algnob and Aloliab). The Action targeted 22,172 children (11,189 boys, 10,983 girls); 9,410 children in SKS (4,631 girls and 4,779 boys) and 12,762 children in RSS (6,352 girls and 6,410 boys). EQUIP1 has given a significant contribution to the quality of education in both SKS and RSS.

There is still a huge necessity to continue to support the improvement of quality education, in particular of the most vulnerable, in RSS and SKS. Hence, four states will be targeted in the new EQUIP.

Save the Children has communicated the EQUIP's location selection criteria to the State Ministries of Education in the four targeted states. These criteria include having a considerable number of refugees and IDPs, in addition to the overall education situation comparing to other state localities. Accordingly, the ministries have provided the names of localities that are in most need of the intervention. To this end, Save the Children will implement EQUIP2 in 10 localities; Blue Nile (3), Khartoum (2), South Kordofan (2) and Red Sea (3).

The Federal Ministry of Education identified priorities in its Education Strategic Plan and the top three s are:

1. **Quality education and learning:** The aim is to enhance students learning, and one of the tools to do this is through learning materials provision. The focus here is to support the provision of appropriate materials to enhance learning.
2. **Access and equity to general education:** to ensure that the children who are excluded from primary knowledge and post-basic education are brought back to school. This includes opening up technical and vocational training in secondary to accommodate children who want to pursue hands-on skills.
3. **Governance and system strengthening for improved results accountability:** the aim is to support the monitoring and assessment of learning and the expansion of opportunities in general education. This priority area supports reforms on assessments; curriculum review and restructuring of the education system; reforms on teacher preparation and establishment of mechanisms for their support during practice; and seeks to elevate the place of research and development and general application of knowledge management in the sector.

Save the Children has designed this action to support achieving the first two priorities in its targeted localities in the four states of Blue Nile, Khartoum, South Kordofan, and Red Sea. Save the Children will also consider the enormous disparities in the findings and analysis, with Blue Nile and South Kordofan with the worst results in terms of available learning spaces as well as learning outcomes.

The project's overall objective is: To fulfil the right to education and improve the basic education sector in Sudan, with particular attention to the most marginalized groups living in vulnerable situations, including migrants, IDPs, and refugees, especially girls as well as children with disabilities.

The project aims to: Improve equitable access to quality basic education in a conducive learning environment in formal and non-formal settings.

Target beneficiaries:

In the four targeted states, the targeted localities are the ones with a considerable number of children who have been affected by conflict, making them more vulnerable, with significant challenges to a quality inclusive education.

The direct beneficiaries will be the most marginalized and vulnerable primary school-age children (6-14 years) and children who will be enrolled in formal primary schools and Accelerated Learning Program Centres. In addition, the Action will target teachers, headmasters, SCR, CC, Volunteers Teachers, PTAs, Mother Groups, and other members of community-based structures. 180 schools will be targeted in the four States. The estimated target of the Action in four states will be 62,595 students (31,923 boys, 30,672 girls).

Indirect beneficiaries and other stakeholders: State, locality, and community leaders and administrators and community at large, partners and organizations working in the same geographical area and sector, and the Ministry of Education.

The project's main outputs are:

1. Increased availability and access to inclusive basic education and ALP centers for school-age children particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable.
2. Improved inclusive, quality learning and teaching process
3. Improved literacy and numeracy for children
4. Increased capacity and engagement of children and communities in support of children's learning

For objectives and each output, indicators were included:

Impact (Overall objective)	% and # of children (disaggregated by gender, vulnerable groups, and locality) who have completed basic education by 2023 % and # of Alternative Learning Programs Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) children (disaggregated by gender, vulnerable groups, and locality) who were reintegrated in basic education by 2023
Specific Objective	% and # of children (disaggregated by gender, vulnerable groups, and locality) attending school % and # children enrolled and completing the programs in ALP centres, (disaggregated by gender, vulnerable groups, and locality)
Output 1	% and # of children (disaggregated by gender, vulnerable groups, and locality) newly enrolled and completing programs in the supported schools (including grade 1 and newly enrolled in other grades) % and # of school-age children enrolled and completing in ALP classes (disaggregated by gender, vulnerable groups, and locality) % of girls/boys enrolled in ALP that successfully transition to formal schools (disaggregated by vulnerable groups and locality) # classrooms rehabilitated and constructed with ramps # of schools with disability-accessible latrines/toilets % of boys and girls have access to gender-disaggregated latrines with lockable doors
Output 2	# and % of teachers trained in child-centred, gender-sensitive inclusive teaching methods, positive discipline, child protection, and psychosocial support # and % of headmasters and deputies trained in school management, positive discipline and child protection # and % of ALP teachers trained on ALP curriculum, interactive and inclusive teaching # and % of ALP teachers trained on ALP curriculum, who are integrating interactive and inclusive education in their classrooms # and % of teachers and school management who are aware of the different background and learning needs of each learner and reflect on how to meet the different needs of the children best # and % of children benefited from learning, teaching, reading and recreational materials # and % of school facilities reaching physical and psychological standards of quality learning framework
Output 3	80% and number 1,080 of cycle one teachers are using the literacy and numeracy boost techniques. (teachers – 6 per school x 180 specify gender if possible) % and # of target children demonstrating improvement in literacy and numeracy %and # of teachers demonstrating LB and NB methodologies in the classroom # of teachers training in LB methodologies # of students with increased access to grade-level-appropriate reading materials # of students participating in community-based reading activities

Output 4	<p># and % of learners participating actively in decision - making activities in their schools (e.g., via children's club or SRCs).</p> <p>% of targeted children that report an inclusive learning environment free from all forms of violence, abuse, discrimination, neglect and exploitation (disaggregated by sex)</p> <p>% of schools and ALPs with functional child protection reporting mechanisms</p> <p># and % of PTAs established/strengthened in targeted schools</p> <p># and % of mother groups established in targeted schools</p> <p># and % trainers on SIPs and grant management</p> <p># of SIP action plans which are completed.</p> <p># and % PTAs trained on quality standards, SIPs and school grants</p> <p># and % schools used a school grant to implement their SIPs</p> <p>% of schools with children involved in decision making</p> <p># of PTAs, (parents and caregivers) participated in PTA forums inside the state</p> <p># of PTAs members (parents and caregivers) participated in PTA outside state forum</p> <p># of students participated in connecting schools' activities.</p> <p># of EQUIP2 SCI exchange visit with participation of SCI EQUIP2 team and Senior staff from State Ministry of Education.</p>
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SCOPE OF BASELINE

The baseline will cover all projects indicators identified in the log frame; it will target population in 10 localities in 4 project's targeted states. It will also provide critical information about education situation in 4 targeted states to be used by technical specialists in relation to thematic approaches to be used in this project.

KEY QUESTIONS

- **Relevance:**

- What is the current situation with reference to project's theory of change and project's performing indicators (set baseline values for all project indicators);
- Who are the key project stakeholders and what they think about current issues related to access and quality of education, and what they think how the situation can be improved?
- What is the stakeholders take on the current design of the project and do they think that the project outputs and activities will actually contribute to achieving the project outcomes and objectives? And also, what they think how the project design can be further improved?
- Is there a well outlined selection criterion for selection of schools and communities agreed by all key stakeholders? How can the selection criteria be further improved?
- What do targeted children think about the design of the project? And what are their suggestions to further improve the design?
- What are the institutional arrangement gaps at different tiers, locality level, state level and federal level and how can this project contribute in filling those gaps?
- What needs to be done to make this project gender sensitive?

- **Coherence:**
 - Are project interventions complimenting to Sudan’s national education policies and strategies?
 - Are project interventions in line with Save the Children’s thematic strategies and implementation approaches?
 - How strong are elements of child participation in the project interventions? And how do targeted children view about it?
- **Effectiveness:**
 - What are enablers and barriers to achieving the planned objectives including access to inclusive basic education and ALP centers, quality learning and teaching, improving literacy and numeracy for children, and communities and children’s involvement in children’s learning?
 - How participation of targeted communities be ensured to enhance the effectiveness of the project interventions?
 - What needs to be included for effective delivery of the project interventions?
 - How to ensure that schools and learning centers encourage and support active engagement of learners and child-centered teaching?
 - Do planned intervention contribute to increase availability and access education without discrimination, and cater for the needs of vulnerable groups, and ensure gender mainstreaming?
 - How to involve existing community structure, community leaders, PTAs members, and mother groups for information sharing and community participation during the project implementation?
 - How to adapt literacy boost best practices of other countries to Sudan context with consideration to the targeted states?
 - What measures were taken to ensure Accountability to Affected Population? And how these contributed to improved deliver of interventions?
- **Efficiency:**
 - Is there appropriate resource allocation for the implementation of project interventions considering all project interventions?
 - Which project interventions or functions might need less or more resources for smooth implementation of the project?
 - Has the phase planning and yearly planning been done in an appropriate way? How can it be further improved?
 - Is the implementation plan coherent considering the sequencing of the project interventions?
- **Sustainability:**
 - How viable is the envisaged sustainability plan?
 - What are the key risks and barriers for sustainability of project interventions?

What needs to be done to ensure sustainability of project interventions, especially considering the roles of key project stakeholders?

TIMEFRAME

Phase of the study	Deliverables	Days indication	Proposed date
Inception phase	Draft inception report	2	01 -03 August 2021
Tools development phase	Deliverable 1: final inception report including methodology and quantitative and qualitative research tools approved by SCI	3	03-06 Aug.2021
Data collection phase	Desk review, collecting data from 10 localities in 4 states	21	06-28 Aug.2021
Data analyses phase	Preliminary report and Presentation of key findings	7	28 Aug. – 05 Sep.2021
Evaluation report phase	Draft Baseline Report, for comment by project team in SCI	3	05-08 Sep.2021
	Deliverable 2: Learning session to present draft report	1	09 Sep.2021
	Deliverable 3: Final Baseline Report	8	09-18 Sep 2021
Total		45 Days	

BASELINE METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the baseline should be participatory and inclusive, engaging all above outlined target groups in the process, including children and adolescents. The baseline should be sensitive to social norms and practice, especially in relation to topics such as children living with a disability or SGBV.

It is a key priority for Save the Children that data are collected in a safe and ethical manner, especially when engaging with children. Data collection tools should be age-appropriate and child-friendly and risk assessments should be conducted prior to the baseline.

Data collection methods

The consultant should come up with qualitative and quantitative methodology; select a representative sample size using statistical procedures. Data collection methods will consist of both primary and secondary data. Primary data collection will happen through many tools such as: questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews with target groups, non-target groups and stakeholders, as well as project staff and partner staff. Secondary data collection will include a review of existing project documents and government administrative records, reports, etc...

All data, analysis and findings should be disaggregated by gender, age, location, vulnerability (disabilities) as well as by refugee, IDP and host community.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations will be applied, including the following:

- **Do no harm.** The baseline will be designed and implemented in such a way that it does not put people at risk of harm, whether intentionally or unintentionally. The consultant as well as anyone supporting data collection will be trained on (child) safeguarding policy and referral practices. A referral procedure will be developed to ensure that protection concerns identified during data collection are referred timely and appropriate. A risk assessment should be completed prior to data collection in each area. The risk assessment will specifically consider COVID-19 related risks and mitigation measures.
- **Do good.** In addition to do-no-harm considerations, this baseline will be helpful to those people taking part in the data collection.
- **Respect for autonomy.** Participation in the data collection activities is a free decision. Potential participants (adults and children) will be provided with information about Save the Children, the purpose of the data collection, the length and scope of the data collection activity, and Save the Children's feedback and reporting processes, to ensure they can make an informed decision about their participation. If at any point in time during the data collection, the participant does not want to continue, he or she will be free to stop. This will be explained at the start of the activity.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Inception report

An inception report will be developed by the selected consultant, expanding on the methodology outlined above and the guiding principles of the baseline. It should highlight: Objectives and key questions, Methodology, Data collection methods, sampling considerations, timeline and logistics, etc.

Data collection tools: Will develop by selected consultant and be discussed and approved by SCI project team lead by MEAL.

Baseline Final Report:

The final report should include the following sections:

- Table of Contents
- List of Acronyms
- List of Tables
- Executive Summary
- Background
- Scope of baseline
- Methodology
- Main Findings (answer all questions about baseline figures required in the log frame) and discussions
- Conclusions and Recommendations.
- Annexes
 - Project log frame with filled baseline data. – Consultant.
 - baseline ToR - SCI
 - Objectives and key questions - Consultant
 - Methodology – SCI/consultant
 - Study tools – Consultant.

- Study schedule – Consultant with SCI timeframe.
- List of people involved – Consultant.

Sharing Baseline findings

The Baseline report will be shared internally with Save the Children staff, including Save the Children Sweden, as well as with the Donor. The consultant will be asked to present key findings to project staff at the end of their contract through a workshop. They will also be asked to create a two-page summary with key findings that can be widely circulated within the Sudan Country Office.

CONSULTANT PROFILE

The following are the main requirements for the consultant:

- Proven record in baseline of humanitarian projects in the NGO sector.
- Broad knowledge of humanitarian and development issues, specifically in education.
- Proven experience in quantitative and qualitative analysis.
- Fluency in Arabic and English is a requirement.
- Excellent verbal/written communication skills and strong report writing skills.
- Awareness of cultural sensitivities and local context
- Ability to work with team and under pressure to meet deadlines and produce agreed deliverables.

To apply for the consultancy, applicants are expected to share the following documents:

- A proposal showing your understanding of the assignment and how you will conclude the work, including proposed methodologies, mode of analysis, and the number of personnel to be involved, detailed timelines, budget and terms of payment and any foreseen challenges.
- Up to date organizational/individual Consultant CVs and CVs for relevant staff.
- Cover letter.
- Three sample reports from previous most recent consulting projects (all samples will be kept confidential) or links to website where reports can be retrieved (highly recommended).

Once a candidate has been selected the following documents will be made available (at a minimum):

- Report Scoring Tool
- Project proposals
- Project log frame