



Terms of Reference: Consultancy to Conduct a Study on Domestic Education Financing in Lesotho

1.0 Background:

The Education Out Loud (EOL) program – is a Global Partnership for Education’s (GPE) funded program with the goal of strengthening civil society advocacy and influencing work in education policy processes, to better meet the needs of communities, especially of vulnerable and marginalized populations by promoting inclusion and learning, enhance accountability and transparency in education policy and create an enabling global and transnational environment for civil society engagement. It is resourced by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) (www.globalpartnership.org) and managed by Oxfam Denmark (www.educationoutloud.org).

Objectives of EOL:

The overall Goal of Education Out Loud is to enhance civil society capacity efforts to strengthen advocacy, learning, equity, and stronger systems and to ensure transparency and increased effectiveness in national educational policy and implementation processes. In order to further ‘GPE 2025’ strategic plan overall goal to accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive, and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century. It seeks to promote more equitable, efficient domestic education spending while offering innovative financing mechanisms.

In particular, Education Out Loud has three specific objectives namely:

- a) Objective 1 (OC1): “Strengthen national civil society engagement in gender responsive education planning, policy development and monitoring”.
- b) Objective 2 (OC2): Strengthen civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation.; and

- c) Objective 3 (OC3): Create a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts.

2.0 Introduction:

The Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN) is an umbrella organization for civil society groups in Lesotho. Established to support the NGO community, LCN offers services such as networking, leadership development, information dissemination, capacity building, coordination, advocacy, and representation in dealings with the international community and government. LCN operates through sectoral commissions to streamline coordination among similar members. Among the six commissions, the Health, Education, and Social Development Commission and the Economic Justice Commission oversee issues related to education and other socio-economic indicators.

LCN includes education in its work due to the belief that human capital is a nation's greatest asset. Education is seen as a crucial means for disadvantaged individuals to achieve positive changes in their lives. LCN uses social accountability tools, recognized globally for improving service delivery and governance, to promote educational attainment. These tools include participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, citizen report cards, social audits, citizen charters, right to information acts, and community scorecards (CSCs).

Annually, LCN analyzes the national budget with a focus on the education budget, as education in Lesotho typically receives the highest or second-highest allocation. Despite this significant investment, the country faces high unemployment and a mismatch between graduates' skills and employers' needs, highlighting the need for innovative education funding models.

Globally, the 2015 United Nations initiatives, including UNESCO and UNICEF, emphasized Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education 2030, setting broad roadmaps for development amidst financing deficits and conflicts. SDG4 aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Governments are increasingly recognized as the primary providers of inclusive quality education, at least at the basic level, through efficient, equitable, and sustainable financing. Innovative financing is necessary to supplement traditional revenue streams, such as taxation and development assistance, to sustainably finance quality education.

Thus, LCN seeks to conduct research to review the current government funding models and analyze how they contribute to innovative, sustainable education financing.

3.0 Specific Objectives of the Consultancy:

(i) **Analyze various financing models in Lesotho and identify an innovative model that efficiently mobilizes and allocates resources to critical education sectors, ensuring the most disadvantaged communities are prioritized. This includes:**

- Conducting a desk survey of the national financing models used for the education sector.
- Assessing existing innovative financing models, both domestic and international, that could be adapted for Lesotho.
- Undertaking a comprehensive and comparative analysis of these models to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.
- Making recommendations on innovative options for the government to adopt to improve education financing, ensuring sustainable, effective, and efficient resource mobilization and use.

4.0 Scope of the Consultancy:

The consultancy will involve the following key tasks:

- I. Reviewing existing education financing models and innovative financing tools used by the Government and other actors over the last 5-10 years.
- II. Conducting a comprehensive and comparative analysis of these models to assess their merits and demerits.
- III. Reviewing samples of financing tools and documentation to provide recommendations for sustainable improvements.
- IV. Exploring how state and non-state actors can utilize innovative financing approaches to supplement and enhance the provision of quality education, supporting the government's commitment to the right to education.
- V. Developing an initial report proposing how the government can sustainably increase education sector financing.
- VI. Facilitating a validation meeting to present and discuss the proposed innovative financing strategies.

- VII. Finalizing the report and proposed innovative financing models for education, to be used by the LCN for advocacy.

5.0 Requirements:

- a) Master's degree in Education, Economics, Social Sciences and/or Public Policy.
PHD will be an added advantage
- b) At least five (5) years' experience in operational planning and project management.
- c) Practical experience in the planning and implementation of similar assignments.

OR

- a) Bachelor's degree in Education, Economics, Social Sciences and/or Public Policy.
- b) At least ten (10) years' experience in operational planning and project management.
- c) At least five (5) years' practical experience in the planning and implementation of similar assignments

6.0 Duration:

The assignment is planned to take a period of 1 month with regular updates provided to the Council.

7.0 Payment Schedule:

The consultant will be paid as follows:

Deliverable	% to be paid	Timeframe
Inception report Detailing conceptual understanding of the assignment, Methodology to be used and deliverables timeline. In the form of technical and financial proposal.	20%	One week
1 st Draft document of the study	40%	Three weeks
Final Draft after Validation Meeting	40%	One week

8.0 Budget:

The consultant(s) or research team is requested to provide a detailed budget proposal, including costs for data collection, analysis, report writing, and presentation of findings.

9.0 Submission of Proposals:

Interested consultant/s or research teams are invited to submit their proposals, including a detailed methodology, a timeline, and a budget proposal, to recruitment@lcn.org.ls or hand delivered to LCN offices House NO 544, Hoohlo Extension by **12:00noon [19th July 2024]**.

LCN reserves the right of choice of a consultant/s and/or firm and the right to withdraw the advert if the no one meets the criteria.

10.0 Evaluation of Proposals:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the proposed methodology, experience of the consultant(s) or research team, and the cost-effectiveness of the proposal.

11.0 Confidentiality

- All information and data collected during this research must be treated with the utmost confidentiality and used solely for the purposes of this study.