



This action is funded by the European Union

**ANNEX 1**

of the Commission Decision on the Annual Action Programme 2015 in favour of Liberia to be financed from the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund

**Action Document for Ready for Life (R4L): EU Support to Out of School Children in Liberia**

<b>1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number</b>	Ready for Life (R4L): EU Support to Out of School Children in Liberia CRIS number: LR/FED/037-897 financed under the 11 <sup>th</sup> European Development Fund			
<b>2. Zone benefiting from the action/location</b>	West Africa, Liberia  The action shall be carried out at the following location: In selected counties in Liberia with focus on urban areas with large numbers of out of school children and underserved counties to be identified following a situation analysis of out of school children at the beginning of the intervention			
<b>3. Programming document</b>	Liberia National Indicative Programme (NIP) for the period 2014-2020			
<b>4. Sector of concentration/ thematic area</b>	Focal sector 2: Education			
<b>5. Amounts concerned</b>	Total estimated cost: EUR 12 000 000 Total amount of EDF contribution EUR 12 000 000			
<b>6. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)</b>	Project Modality Indirect management with an international organisation Direct management: Audit and Evaluations			
<b>7. DAC code(s)</b>	11230 - Basic life skills for youth and adults			
<b>8. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>

	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>9. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flags</b>	N/A			

## SUMMARY

Liberia has a large number of children and youth who are beyond the age of primary school entry but who have had almost no learning opportunities at all. Youth unemployment is a constant feature of life in Liberia; a potential trigger of instability and contributes to low economic productivity nationwide. The recent Ebola Virus Disease outbreak has exacerbated this situation.

The proposed EU interventions would support implementation of the Agenda for Transformation, the Education Sector Plan, and the Economic Stabilisation and Recovery Plan. Collectively, these policies and strategies provide a sound basis for intervention in the sector by contributing to the development of educational opportunities for Liberia's children and youth. The EU support would focus on implementation of good-quality alternative learning opportunities for children who have not had access to schooling and who have passed the age where access to primary school is a feasible option. Three areas of emphasis are proposed: (i) a situation analysis on out of school children, establishment of baseline information, policy framework and operational plan on alternative education (ii) training of the teachers who will provide the alternative learning opportunities for children and capacity development plan for the Ministry of Education, and (iii) implementation of a teaching and learning program with clear goals for learning, attention to equity concerns, and specific accountability mechanisms linked to results.

## 1 CONTEXT

### Sector/Country/Regional context/Thematic area

The Ebola Virus Disease struck Liberia in March of 2014 at a time when enormous efforts were still being exerted to rebuild an economy and social texture devastated by the fourteen-year civil war. Real gross domestic product (GDP) growth for 2014, which was initially projected at 5.8%, is estimated to have declined sharply to 0.7%, compared to 8.9% in 2013. The economic impact of the Ebola outbreak was compounded by the steep decline in iron ore prices, weak gold performance – both stalling planned investment in the mining sector – as well as the outlook of other key commodities such as rubber and palm oil. The medium-term economic outlook remains challenging. Real GDP growth is projected to remain weak in 2015, with a gradual recovery taking hold in 2016 buoyed by a rebound in agriculture and services.

Prior to the onset of the Ebola crisis, Liberia was in the second year of the implementation of its ambitious medium-term development strategy: The *Agenda for Transformation* based on four pillars—Peace, Security and the Rule of Law; Economic Transformation; **Human Development**; and Governance and Public. Major challenges remain to the implementation and the achievement of the Agenda for Transformation goals, whose progress was further exacerbated by the effects of the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak.

The Government, in cooperation with the international partners, has set out priorities to contain the health crisis, resume all schooling activities and mitigate its short-term consequences on affected households through cash transfers, cash-for-work programmes and food aid. Building a healthy and

skilled workforce for the future is considered critical and calls for immediate reform in the health and education sectors.

The Government of Liberia Economic Stabilisation and Recovery Plan, developed in March 2015, recognises that for Liberia to become a middle income country, education and training are key areas requiring investment with a view to increasing especially the potential productivity and employability of the country's youth. Alarming shortfalls in both quantity and quality of education services persist at all levels: primary school Net Enrolment Rates languishes at 26.9%, and 25% of primary students drop out of school each year<sup>1</sup>. School aged children from 2 to 17 years old account for 43% of the population. In 2012, a total of 571,555 children were **out-of-school children**. This represents **61% of the official primary school aged population**. According to the 2014 Education Monitoring and Information System (EMIS) data, the total number of students enrolled from pre-primary to senior high is 1,153,316. Over aged children across all levels of the education system account for 82.4%, with 87.8% at primary education level. A high percentage of children and adolescents are not in school, having either dropped out or never started. Due to inadequate resources and poor capacity, among teachers and the overall governance system of the sector, basic education services are lacking in many communities, especially in rural areas.

### 1.1.1. Public policy assessment and EU policy framework

#### POLICY FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW AND KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Education Law 2002:** Establishes free and compulsory primary education.
- **The Education Reform Act 2011** establishes free compulsory education up to junior high level. It also provides the roadmap for decentralization of the education sector, intended to improve the provision of education services.
- **The Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2010-2020:** outlines strategies and policies for reconstruction and development of education in Liberia and provides a solid basis for improving enrolment and quality of public education across key strategic programmes in Liberia. Its principal objectives are to provide guidelines for the preparation of medium term plans and to serve as a monitoring and evaluation tool to assess progress.
- **The Children's Bill (2009):** Brings the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other child-related international legal instruments to which Liberia is a State Party into domestic law. Among other actions, the bill foresees that the government will establish a child rights education fund and a child rights education committee.
- **National Policy on Girls' Education (2013):** Drafted by the Ministry of Education (MoE) with UNICEF and other partners, this policy promotes the education of girls through several measures, including recruiting and training more female teachers, providing counselling in schools for girls, ending the impunity of teachers who commit sexual abuse and assault of students, increasing the availability of small scale scholarships for girls.

The Ministry of Education has prioritized Alternative Education in its Operational Plan 2014-2016 with a view to institutionalizing Alternative Education in order to provide learning opportunities for over-aged and out of school children and youth, through developing standards on Alternative Education, mainstreaming Alternative Education into basic level education, clarifying and formalizing clear pathways to transition into the formal system, and developing curriculum and training material for both teachers and learners.

The Government of Liberia budget for financial year (FY) 2015/16 has increased in nominal terms by 22% from the previous year (by 5% when the donor aid is included). According to the latest published budget execution reports,<sup>2</sup> the largest portion of the budget remains on salaries (as much as 2.1% of

<sup>1</sup>Education Statistics for the Republic of Liberia: National Statistical Booklet 2014 (MoE 2014 EMIS data)

<sup>2</sup>Fiscal Outturn Report for Third Quarter of Fiscal Year 2014/15, Commitments July 1, 2014-March 31, 2015, p. 20, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, May 2015; and Annual Fiscal Outturn Report for Fiscal Year 2013/14 (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014), Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, February 2015.

GDP in FY 2013/14) and yet, with recent progress in the removing of unauthorized education workers in the payroll, the analysis of public expenditure indicates the budget has shifted more towards increasing purchases of basic school and food supplies and transfers of grants to district school authorities over the past two fiscal years.

The Education Strategic Response Plan developed by the Education Cluster in the first quarter of 2015 advocates for strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability of the education system. It highlights the need for improving the quality of primary, secondary, vocational and Alternative Education programmes and functional education services and management at all levels and ensuring a gender responsive education system. It recognizes Liberian youth as the country's most valuable asset and notes that a high percentage of children and adolescents are not in school, having either dropped out or never started.

Through its NIP 2014-2020, the EU supports Liberia's strategic objectives of improving quality, relevance and accessibility of basic education.

### **1.1.2 Stakeholder analysis**

The main direct beneficiaries of the action are the **out of school children aged 8 to 15 years old** participating in the programme. The interventions will reach at least 70,000 Liberian children, 50% of whom at least will be girls.

The out of school children issue is a crucial one to Liberia especially as it has a very young population with currently approximately 75% under the age of 35 years old and over one third (42%) school aged children between the ages of 3-14. Addressing the needs of children and adolescents who have missed out on education, either due to the conflict, poverty, traditional practices or lack of access, is seen as a priority by the Government of Liberia. In the medium to long term, increasing access to quality education for the 3-15 years old group will ensure a socially adept, robust and labour ready human capital pipeline. This will not only support growth and development in Liberia but will also have a profound effect on maintaining stability in the country, ensuring sustainable peace and stability.

In the 2011 Liberia out of school children Report,<sup>3</sup> a total of 1,072,393 were classified as out of school using the UNICEF and UNESCO global five dimensions of exclusion. This represents over one fourth of the overall country's population. Of these, 53% or 571,535 were physically out of school (of which 327,318 at the primary and junior high levels combined), while the remaining 47% (or 500,958) were in the primary and junior high levels but at risk of dropping out. At these levels children at risk of dropping out of school constitute 62% of the total gross enrolment.

While no study so far has yet been carried out to ascertain this, the impact of the Ebola Virus Disease is likely to have increased the number of out of out of school children due to the simple fact that schools were closed for months, orphanhood, loss of livelihoods and income at household level, stigma and discrimination

The project will also impact other groups of children through a strong component of policy influencing, public information, awareness raising and community mobilization, particularly:

- Prospective learners of basic education under the age of 6 years old and their parents by promoting age-appropriate enrolment into basic education and the elimination of the grade 1 entry examination
- All future children in the Liberian education system by gradually embedding the training on Alternative Education into the curriculum of the Teacher Training Institutes where primary school teachers are trained.
- The project will have a particular focus on children with disabilities whom where possible will be integrated in the Alternative Education programme and formal schools.

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<sup>3</sup>Global Initiative on Out of School Children, Liberia Country Study, UNESCO/UNICEF March 2012

**Teachers** are also a key target group of the intervention which has a key objective building teacher capacity. It has been agreed with the Ministry of Education that teachers will be drawn, where possible, from the Government of Liberia payroll to ensure sustainability of the action in areas with teacher availability and, when not possible, the Ministry of Education with the support of UNICEF will devise a strategy to identify and recruit new teachers that will be placed on the government payroll. The programme will capitalize where possible on existing community volunteers running Alternative Education programmes who will be recognized and integrated into the payroll. **A total of 600 teachers a year<sup>4</sup> below the age of 50 – for retention and sustainability purposes - of which 40% female will be trained and co-opted to work full time in the delivery of the Alternative Education programme.**

At present, teachers generally lack subject knowledge, didactic skills and an appreciation of learner centred methodologies and innovative ways of teaching with the “chalk and talk” method being the prevalent method of teaching.

**Ministry of Education Governance and Management:** The policy-level engagement of the programme through Ministry of Education officials at national, county and district level will be designed to facilitate the decentralisation processes in the longer term and strengthen the Ministry of Education's capacity for monitoring in the shorter term. The programme will include a strong Capacity Development component both at central and decentralized level.

Furthermore it will build the capacity of the County and District School Boards as per the provisions of the 2011 Education Act which stipulates that they are to provide oversight of all education issues at decentralized level.

**Community members, Youth-based organizations and the Parents and Teachers Associations** will be critical for community based awareness, advocacy and mobilisation. Youth identified from youth-based organizations will play a key role in providing peer support initiatives and mentoring for the children in the Alternative Education programme, reducing chances of drop outs.

### **1.1.3. Priority areas for support/problem analysis**

**Liberia has one of the relative highest number of children out of school in the world.** The reduction of the number of out of school children and the sustainability of Alternative Education depends on addressing underlying issues in the education system.

**Inequities that disfavour the poor, and the disabled.** Equity is a major concern across the education system. There are large numbers of informal payments, ranging from book contributions to bribes for school placement, extra tuition for teachers and payments for grades, examination, entrance and certification, which inevitably impact the poor. Poverty and the need to work to survive pull poor children out of school, with girls being particularly vulnerable. Stigma and unpreparedness of the education system to properly deal with inclusion make access a challenge for the vast majority of children with disabilities.

**Teachers are the most important resource for improving learning.** A government payroll inflated by “ghost” teachers which drains much needed resources that could be utilized to boost the education system and poor teacher capacity present a major obstacle to achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals in Liberia.

**Scarce capacity by the Ministry of Education to monitor programme interventions and consequently in planning and management,** including end user monitoring of supplies, and effectively govern the teacher body i.e. through school inspections and enforcement of the Teacher

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<sup>4</sup>1800 in the multi-year programme. Those co-opted in Year 1 of the implementation will accompany one cohort of students through the three levels of the programme and begin with a new cohort in the Year 4 of implementation.

Code of Conduct. Data availability has improved in recent years but remains a major challenge. There is scarce transparency to the public of how resources are planned and distributed leading to missed opportunities in terms of engaging in reform processes.

## 2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risks	Risk level	Mitigating measures
<b>Lack of strategic and operational linkages between Alternative Education and other key areas including Early Childhood Development and basic education</b>	M	The project will support the Ministry of Education to devise a mechanism to address public information, awareness raising and policy enforcement in the areas of Early Childhood Development, age-appropriate enrolment and other keys aspects of the Education Operational Plan. Furthermore it will contribute to the establishment of clear pathways between the different education sub-sectors.
<b>Weak governance and management and poor quality of education:</b> poor teacher capacity, lack of trained teachers; uncondusive learning environments; non implementation of education policies; lack of adequate capacity of the Ministry of Education; inadequate financing by the Government of Liberia	H	A Capacity Development strategy will be devised to ensure long term Government capacity is built to improve the planning, management and monitoring and evaluation.  The EU, with the national Authorizing Officer (NAO) will advocate for increased resource allocation by the Government of Liberia to basic education as these become available through the savings achieved through the payroll clearance.  Focal persons in each relevant Ministry of Education Division and Bureau directly involved in the action will be identified.
<b>Exploitation by teachers:</b> Endemic Sexual and Gender Based Violence in schools perpetrated by teachers; money for grades, work for grades <sup>5</sup> .	M	Training on Code of Conduct for Teachers, including the sanctions it foresees. It has been agreed with the Ministry of Education that the school community of each school participating in the project will be informed that the programme will be withdrawn where any one case of exploitation is found to take place at school level and not acted upon.
<b>Fragmentation in the delivery of Alternative Education by various education partners</b>	H	The programme will support the Ministry of Education in the development of an Alternative Education framework.  There will be joint planning, reviews and monitoring of interventions by the Ministry of Education and partners to avoid duplication and fragmentation of efforts and approaches

<sup>5</sup>i.e. the widespread phenomenon of students being exploited by teachers who oblige them to work on their farms in exchange for grades and promotion.

<b>Ebola Virus Disease</b>	M	Aspects of preparedness, resilience with hygiene awareness and health education will be embedded in the curriculum and training for both teachers and learners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assumptions</b></li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The political environment will remain stable particularly in conjunction with the Presidential elections to be held in 2017.</li> <li>• Growing commitment and leadership from the Government of Liberia and the Ministry of Education on Alternative Education.</li> <li>• Capacity to implement the action is available at national, county and district level: the Ministry of Education assumes leadership and ownership for the development of Alternative Education, identifying and allocating appropriate Human Resources and restricting the turnover of staff.</li> <li>• Commitment by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to place on the payroll those teachers in the programme who currently are not, to sustain Alternative Education programmes.</li> <li>• UNICEF will allocate appropriate Human Resources to the programme,</li> <li>• The identified stakeholders will be fully engaged from the onset of the project and will be willing to fully participate.</li> <li>• The Ministry of Education will ensure the strict enforcement of teacher assignment rules and other measures to ensure teacher presence and commitment.</li> <li>• Continued cleaning of the teacher payroll releases funds for development investments.</li> </ul>		

### 3 LESSONS LEARNT, COMPLEMENTARITY AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

#### 3.1 Lessons learnt

- **Out of school children, drop outs, and over aged students:** The **Out of School Children Study commissioned by the Ministry of Education in 2011** with UNICEF highlights how enrolment of children at levels far below their ages as a result of starting school very late is one of the major causes of children dropping out of school.
- **Scarce monitoring by the Ministry of Education and increased capacity is necessary for the Ministry of Education to monitor effectively:** Joint field visits undertaken by EU, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education in 2015 confirmed that monitoring of schools and centres where Alternative Education programmes are delivered by the Ministry of Education or non-governmental organizations requires urgent strengthening.
- **Fragmentation and the need for a Framework:** UNICEF commissioned an **external formal evaluation of the Liberia Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) in 2011** which highlights that due to the late development of the Accelerated Learning Programme policy guidelines and scarce monitoring, fragmentation in the implementation was a major challenge including variances in the quality of teaching and learning on the programme and payment models
- **Lack of Teacher Capacity and need for teacher training:** The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Advancing Youth Programme suggests that teachers working on payroll frequently lack teaching capacity and significant investment in training is needed.

- **Licensing of teachers:** The Ministry of Education and the National Teachers Association should establish a programme for certifying teachers before they can be allowed to teach, and establish standards for teaching at the various levels of the education system including Alternative Education.
- **Overwhelming demand and need for AE:** The **IBIS study 2005-2015: Reflections on the Accelerated Learning Programme** highlighted that there is still a need and demand for the ALP or an alternative which targets age-appropriate basic education for young people. It also found that the children/youth's desire to learn and continue learning was enhanced as a result of their participation in the ALP, which improved their self-confidence and self-belief.
- **Curriculum revision:** Consultations undertaken by the EU, Ministry of Education and UNICEF with NGOs that implemented the ALP in the past before it disappeared completely in 2012, principals, teachers formerly implementing the Accelerated Learning Programme, pointed out the need for curriculum revision to include life skills and transferable skills relevant for the daily lives of the learners.
- **Sustainability:** All studies mentioned above highlighted the overall lack of sustainability as programmes collapsed once donor funding dried up. This will be avoided by working with teachers who are on government payroll and ensuring they are on the programme full time.

### 3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination

The Action builds upon EU, UNICEF and other development and humanitarian partners' previous and current interventions which have helped to improve children's access to basic education in Liberia.

The main forum for policy dialogue, alignment and harmonization around education strategies and policies in Liberia is the Education Sector Development Committee (ESDC), which oversees the coordination of education activities carried out by the Government of Liberia and partners in line with the Education Sector Plan. The ESDC meets on a monthly basis and is co-chaired by the Ministry of Education and USAID as Coordinating Agency in Liberia for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). USAID, the GPE, the EU and the World Bank are the principal donor agencies within the sector.

Among the existing and complementary key programmes with which linkages will be sought:

- The EU during the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF supported the establishment of 6 Learning Resource Centres in different counties and several schools, some of which will be included in the scope of the programme. The EU is currently supporting the review and piloting of the 'B' Certificate for teachers working at Junior Secondary School level. The out of school children project will build on this and utilize the opportunity of the piloting to embed the Alternative Education teacher training also in the B-Certificate.
- **UNICEF through USAID funding** is supporting the recovery of the education system following the impact of the EVD crisis.
- **Liberia Teacher Training Programme (LTTP)**, the primary teacher training programme funded by USAID is scheduled to phase out in December 2015. Conceptualization of the strategy around teacher identification, recruitment, training and recruitment is drawing from the existing programme's lessons learnt.
- **Global Partnership for Education Basic Education Programme**, implemented by Ministry of Education with the World Bank as Supervising Entity and USAID as Coordinating Agency. To strengthen Alternative Education programmes and expand the scope of the programme to additional counties, the Ministry of Education could apply for complementary funding within its next application to the Global Partnership for Education expected for March 2016.

- **UNICEF – on-going support to the Ministry of Education** includes support to harmonize curricula and facilitate conflict-sensitive service delivery of Early Childhood Development, the level one of the Accelerated Learning Programme curriculum, development of citizenship education for primary school and recreational programming for children in and out of school within select conflict-prone communities under the Learning for Peace programme.
- **Advancing Youth Project (AYP):** multi-year programme in Alternative Basic Education funded by USAID. Close collaboration, information sharing, drawing lessons learned and coordination on any capacity building efforts to the Ministry of Education will be ensured by the Action
- Strategic operational linkages with existing Government of Liberia programmes implemented by other line ministries such as Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare (i.e. the existing Social Cash transfer programme for vulnerable households whose 5 year pilot was supported by the EU), Health, Agriculture Youth and Sports will also be considered.

An Annual Joint Education Sector Review takes place in Liberia with the participation of Government and education development partners.

The Action will operate within the framework of the principles of good international engagement in fragile states and situations as part of the broader Paris Agenda. The proposed Action has adopted these principles and is aligned with the other donors' interventions in the education sector.

### **3.3 Cross-cutting issues**

#### **Capacity Development and Decentralization**

The planned Action will contribute to the Ministry of Education's efforts to strengthen the sector by building capacity at all levels of government and decision-making authority. Decentralization is a key component of the Education Reform Act of 2011 but is far from being achieved. This results in poor oversight and monitoring of the schools across the country, particularly those in the hard to reach areas. The project will address issues of governance and management by building capacity for planning, budgeting, monitoring, data gathering and analysis at national and local levels.

#### **Gender**

Gender and ensuring equitable access and learning for girls will be a strong focus of the Action. Girls face particular risks and vulnerabilities in Liberia such as child marriage and early pregnancy which will be tackled in different ways in curriculum development, teacher training, public information and working with the education system to ensure better linkages with the justice and security system. A minimum of 40% female teachers will be recruited and 50% enrolment will be of girls.

#### **Social cohesion and peacebuilding**

The programme will promote social cohesion and peacebuilding in the selected communities through establishment and strengthening of existing peace committees. The life skills curriculum delivered as part of the Alternative Education programme will embed teachings which will promote negotiation, problem solving and critical thinking skills.

#### **Children with disabilities**

The Action will stimulate the policy dialogue and policy formulation around inclusive education. Children with disabilities, including those who may require special education, who have missed out on schooling, will be encouraged to join the Alternative Education programme wherever possible. All teachers will be trained in the principles of inclusive education and the provision of psycho-social support.

## **Health education**

The Ebola Virus Disease crisis has exposed serious gaps in terms of awareness of personal health and hygiene in communities. Health and hygiene will be included in the Alternative Education life skills curriculum and hence be part of the trainings and learning of both teachers and children.

## **4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION**

### **4.1 Objectives/results**

The Action proposes to provide a concrete response to the burning challenge posed by the overwhelming presence of overaged students in the education system and out of school children in the country, posing a threat to national security and stability, while tackling key shortcomings of the basic education and establishing strategic linkages with other areas including Early Childhood Development and Special Education.

The Action proposes to channel EU support for Alternative Education to the most vulnerable and socially excluded children of Liberia through the establishment of a comprehensive Alternative Education programme together with the Ministry of Education at all levels, communities, UNICEF and partner non-governmental organizations.

**The overall objective** of the action is **to increase access to quality basic education**

**Specific objective 1:** **To increase access to education for out of school children in underserved areas.**

**Specific objective 2:** **To support the Ministry of Education to develop capacity to effectively plan, manage and monitor the implementation of quality pre-primary, formal basic and alternative education programmes.**

The Action will be divided into three main components:

**Component 1:** Situation analysis and establishment of baseline information, policy framework and operational plan for Alternative Education developed and adopted.

**Component 2:** Capacity of Alternative Education teachers developed.

**Component 3:** Out of school children, including those with disabilities, through participation in the alternative education opportunities acquire basic learning and life skills competencies.

### **4.2 Main activities**

**The main activities to be designed will lead to the following key outputs.**

#### **Result 1:**

Output 1.1: Out of School situation analysis completed.

Output 1.2: Alternative Education Framework, Operational Plan developed and adopted

#### **Result 2:**

Output 2.1: Improved system of recruitment, deployment and teacher capacity development.

Output 2.2: Improved Ministry of Education capacity to plan, manage and monitor education programming.

Output 2.3: Support to rehabilitation of education facilities targeted.

### **Result 3:**

Output 3.1: Increased demand for education among out of school children.

Output 3.2: Promoting age-appropriate enrollment through public information.

Output 3.3: Out of school children aged 8 to 15 years old gain improved basic learning and life skills competencies.

## **4.3 Intervention logic**

The overall objective of the action is to increase access to quality education for children through the provision of Alternative Education opportunities and complementary interventions.

This will be done through the specific objective of developing a comprehensive and overarching Alternative Education programme and operational plan that complements the different approaches to Alternative Education addressing not only education and learning needs, but also life skills education needs of out of school children aged 8-15 years. A key objective is to support the Ministry of Education to develop capacity to oversee the complementary implementation of pre-primary, formal basic and Alternative Education programmes and effectively operationalize the Alternative Education Framework within the context of the overall decentralization of the education system - the 2014-2016 Operational Plan outlines how Alternative Education will be institutionalized and mainstreamed into the formal education system through the harmonization of existing programmes, establishment of clear pathways for transition between systems, and institutional capacity development of curricula and instructors.

Sustainability and ownership of the project results is ensured through the institutional capacity building and human resources development of core staff of key ministry departments for all the components through a participative approach.

The proposed results and activities are consistent with the current policy framework for the education sector in Liberia, the Education Sector Development Plan 2010-2020 and the Education for all National Action Plan 2005-15. The combination of the design and intervention/actions will gradually lead to a greater involvement of the central Ministry of Education local government officials, staff of pedagogical institutions in the project activities, which is instrumental for the successful implementation.

## **5 IMPLEMENTATION**

### **5.1 Financing agreement**

In order to implement this action, it is foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country, referred to in Article 17 of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement

### **5.2 Indicative implementation period**

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 4.2 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's authorising officer responsible by amending this decision and the relevant contracts and agreements; such amendments to this decision constitute non-substantial amendment in the sense of Article 9(4) of the Council

### 5.3. Implementation of the budget support component (Not applicable)

### 5.4. Implementation modalities

#### 5.4.1 Grants (not applicable)

#### 5.4.2. Grant direct award (not applicable)

#### 5.4.3 Procurement (direct management)

Subject in generic terms, if possible	Type (works, supplies, services)	Indicative number of contracts	Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure
Audit	Services	1	3 <sup>rd</sup> trimester 2020
Evaluations: 1) Mid-term evaluation 2) Final evaluation	Services	2	1 <sup>st</sup> trimester 2018 3 <sup>rd</sup> trimester 2020

#### 5.4.4. Indirect management with an international organisation

This action may be implemented in indirect management with UNICEF in accordance with Article 58(1)(c) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 applicable by virtue of article 8 of the Council Regulation (EU)2015/323 on the implementation of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF.

This implementation entails that UNICEF will be entrusted with the following responsibilities:

- Manage the EU aid to support the Government of Liberia to address the challenge of out of school children;
- Recruit key staff to ensure effective coordination, management, implementation and monitoring of the overall Action;
- Facilitate regular monitoring of programme interventions as well as joint monitoring visits with the Ministry of Education, EU and the National Authorizing Officer (NAO);
- Facilitate programme reviews in collaboration with EU, Ministry of Education and NAO;
- Initiate all procurement necessary under the Action.

The choice of implementing through an international organisation is justified by the specific context of Liberia. The final evaluation report of the European Commission Support to Education in Liberia (ECSEL) programme implemented under the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF highlights serious challenges in the ability of the Ministry of Education to directly implement and monitor large scale programme interventions, from financial management to end user monitoring of supplies, among others. Moreover, considering the scarce outcomes of the Education sector conditions attached to the State Building Contract during the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF and the unavailability of an active education pool fund, there is at present no suitable viable second option that would enable the EU to achieve the same results.

UNICEF has significant experience in supporting the Government of Liberia in the education sector. It has acted as Coordinating Agency for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) from 2010 to 2014; and more recently has played a key role in supporting the Ministry of Education in the Ebola Virus Disease response.

The entrusted entity would carry out the following budget-implementation tasks:

- Budget implementation tasks are entrusted to the entrusted entity, for procurement of services to facilitate surveys, assessments, baseline studies based on agreed priorities with the Ministry of Education and the EU; procurement of a Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Education focusing on Capacity Development;
- Budget implementation tasks are entrusted to the entrusted entity for contacting relevant non-governmental organisations and youth-based organizations foreseen as essential for the project implementation.

The Commission authorises that the costs incurred by the entrusted entity may be recognised as eligible as of 1 October 2015 because of the urgency to initiate the recruitment of core project staff by UNICEF and preparatory work, particularly the situation analysis of out of school children in Liberia, review and development of curriculum teaching and learning materials in preparation to the teacher training to take place over the school summer break in July and August 2016 and with a view to starting implementation of the Alternative Education programme in the school year beginning in September 2016.

**5.4.5 Indirect management with a regional organisation or the partner country: N/A**

**5.4.6 Contribution to Regional Blending Facility: N/A**

**5.4.7 Changes from indirect to direct management mode due to exceptional circumstances: Not foreseen**

## **5.5 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants**

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility in accordance with Article 22(1)(b) of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

## 5.6 Indicative budget

Result	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Indicative third party contribution
<b>5.4.4 Indirect management with an international organisation, UNICEF</b>	<b>11 750 000</b>	<b>N.A</b>
<b>Component 1:</b> Situation analysis and establishment of baseline information, policy framework and operational plan for Alternative Education developed and adopted.	<b>250 000</b>	
<b>Component 2:</b> Capacity of Alternative Education teachers developed.	<b>580 0000</b>	
<b>Component 3:</b> Out of school children, including those with disabilities, through participation in the alternative education and inclusive education opportunities acquire basic learning and life skills competencies.	<b>555 0000</b>	
Communication and visibility	<b>150 000</b>	
<b>5.9 Evaluation (direct management)</b>	<b>200 000</b>	<b>N.A.</b>
<b>5.10 Audit (direct management)</b>	<b>50 000</b>	<b>N.A.</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>12 000 000</b>	

## 5.7 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

### 5.7.1 Project Steering Committee

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) shall supervise the project, validate its overall direction, implementation and policy aspects and play an alert role where necessary. The SC shall meet twice a year from the signing of the Financing Agreement. It will be chaired by the Deputy Minister for Instruction and consist of: One or more representatives of the Ministry of Education / Representative of the EDF NAO/ A representative of the EU Delegation/ One or more representatives of UNICEF/ Representatives of Non-governmental organizations and youth-based organizations will participate with observer status.

### 5.7.2 County Project Committee

In each County where the project will be implemented, a County Project Committee (CPC) will be formed and will meet quarterly and inform central level on the project implementation and make recommendations if necessary on adjustments. The County Education Officer or the resident District Education Officer will chair the meetings.

## **5.8 Performance monitoring and reporting**

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and direct outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix. The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

## **5.9 Evaluation**

Having regard to the importance of the action, a mid-term and a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants.

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to adapt the project to changing context and make corrections to the projects based on the lessons of the first phase of implementation.

A final or ex-post evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that this project will happen during a period of important education reforms in Liberia, where this can influence the potential impact of the project.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 30 days in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

Indicatively, two contracts for evaluation services shall be concluded under framework contracts in the first trimestre 2018 and in the third trimester 2020.

## **5.10 Audit**

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

Indicatively, one contract for audit services shall be concluded under a framework contract in the third trimester of 2020.

## 5.11 Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, to be elaborated at the start of implementation and **implemented directly by UNICEF with procurement initiated to this end by UNICEF.**

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner country, contractors, grant beneficiaries and/or entrusted entities. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, the financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Action shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

## 6. ACCOMPANYING MEASURES

- **Teacher workforce in the programme:** It has been agreed by all parties that the EU will not cover salaries or incentives for the teachers working in the Alternative Education programme. Ministry of Education has committed to ensuring that 600 teachers are identified and placed full time in the payroll on the Alternative Education programme on an annual basis over a period of three years (1800 teachers in total). The selection and the assignment/recruitment have to be completed before the beginning of the school year starting from year 2 of the project implementation.
- **Capacity of the Ministry of Education staff assigned to the project:** For the Ministry of Education to have ownership over the intervention, it is essential that personnel with the relevant technical capacity is assigned to the project, particularly at the level of the Division on Alternative Education. It was agreed with the Ministry of Education that for any future recruitment related to the project the EU and UNICEF will be invited to participate in the screening, vetting and interviewing process. In turn the Ministry of Education will be invited to participate in the evaluation and interviewing process of UNICEF staff to be recruited for the project.
- **A policy on the language of instruction is developed:** Consultations on the formulation have highlighted the importance of exercising flexibility in the use of mother tongue. The development of curricula and textbooks, and the teacher training programmes depend on a decision on the language of instruction. In July 2015 the Ministry of Education committed to developing and adopting a policy in this regard before the start of the project.

**APPENDIX - INDICATIVE LOGFRAME MATRIX**

The activities, the expected outputs and all the indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix are indicative and may be updated during the implementation of the action without an amendment to the financing decision. The indicative logframe matrix will evolve during the lifetime of the action: new lines will be added for listing the activities as well as new columns for intermediary targets (milestones) when it is relevant and for reporting purpose on the achievement of results as measured by indicators.

	<b>Intervention logic</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Baselines (incl. reference year)</b>	<b>Targets (incl. reference year)</b>	<b>Sources and means of verification</b>	<b>Assumpt ions</b>
<b>Overall objective: impact</b>	To increase access to quality education for children.	Reduction of number of out of school children (OOSC) through enrolment of at least 18,000 learners a year over 4 years	571,555 (OOSC study 2011); EMIS 2015 once published; Preparatory phase situation analysis major source of information	At least 18,000 annually	Enrolment data from Alternative Education (AE) programmes/ Education Monitoring and Information System EMIS  Drop out data from AE programmes/ EMIS	
<b>S p e c i f i c  o b j e c t i v e s :</b>	<b><u>Specific objective 1:</u> To increase access to education for out of school children in underserved areas.</b>	1. Net enrolment ratio  2. Number of students served through Alternative Education (AE) learning programme  3. Enrolment rate of children with disabilities  4. Gender Parity Index in education system and AE  5. Transition rate between AE levels  6. Situation analysis (SITAN) completed	1 to 5: EMIS 2015 data to be available by end of the year  0  0  0  0	1. To be determined (TBD)  2. At least 18,000 a year  3. TBD  4. 50 % girls enrolled  5. TBD  6. SITAN to be completed by 02/2016	1. to 5. EMIS and Enrolment, drop out and other data captured from AE programmes      SITAN report  Independent sampling and participation in screening and interview process Pre- and post-test	
	<b><u>Specific objective 2:</u> To support MOE to develop capacity to</b>	1. % teachers recruited through transparent processes	0	1. 80 %	3. and 4. Ministry of Education	

<b>O u t c o m e s</b>	<b>effectively plan, manage, and monitor the implementation of quality pre-primary, formal basic and alternative education programmes.</b>	2. # of teachers in AE programme who receive training  3. % of female teachers recruited  4.# of AE teachers trained and retained on payroll by MoE  5. # of central MoE level staff, District and County Education Officers, AE supervisors trained 6. # of County AE supervisor posts established by MoE  7. # of materials developed  8. # of facilities renovated	0  0  0	2. 600 a year  3. A minimum of 40%  4. 100 %  5. and 6.TBD based on SITAN and counties identified for the project  TBD based on final decision of solar solution vs. textbooks procurement and outcome of preparatory phase TBD based on SITAN and counties identified for the project	(MoE) HR recruitment data Training workshop reports; TA reports  MoE HR recruitment data  Procurement and distribution plan Field assessment reports by MoE and UNICEF	
<b>O u t p u t s</b>	<u><b>Specific objective 1</b></u> <u><b>Outputs:</b></u> 1.1) OOSC Situation analysis completed.  1.2) AE Framework and operational plan developed and adopted  3.1) Increased demand for education for OOSC  3.2) Promoting age-appropriate enrolment through public information  3.3) OOSC aged 8-15 gain improved basic learning and life skills competencies	Baseline completed  AE Policy framework & Operational Plan developed  # of learners enrolled # of children reached through mentoring programme Transition rates between levels of the programme  # of children entering grade 1 at age 6 # of schools dropping the grade one entry level exam # of schools fined for violating the entrance examination for grade one policy # of materials developed # of AE learners tested and achieving minimum level of defined learning outcomes	0  2009 ALP policy guidelines; 2011 ABE policy  0 18,000 per year  0  EMIS 2015  0  0  0 0	Baseline completed by 02/2016  Validation meeting held and policy framework launched by 03/2016  TBD during preparatory phase TBD during preparatory phase  TBD during preparatory phase  TBD during preparatory phase  TBD during preparatory phase  TBD during preparatory phase TBD during preparatory phase	SITAN report; EMIS 2015  Reports from Validation meeting and policy launch event  Reports from Validation meeting and policy launch event  Learning centre reports; Test results  Learning centre reports; Test results	

<p><b>Specific objective 2</b> <b>Outputs:</b></p> <p>2.1.) Improved system of recruitment, deployment and teacher training</p> <p>2.2.) Improved MOE capacity to plan, manage and monitor education programming.</p> <p>2.3.) Support to rehabilitation of education facilities targeted.</p>	<p>Transition rate between levels of AE programme</p> <p># of learners with disabilities achieving minimum level of defined learning outcomes</p>	0	0	TBD during preparatory phase			
			0	0	TBD during preparatory phase		
		<p>Terms of Reference for AE teachers developed</p> <p>% of teachers in AE programme who receive in-service training</p> <p>Core set of AE master trainers trained to provide pre- and in-service training</p> <p>Teacher training package developed for initial training and continuous professional development</p>	0	0	TOR for AE teachers available by December 2015 <p>100 %</p>	TOR available with BS and HR Division <p>Training workshop reports</p>	
			0	0	TBD in preparatory phase	Training reports and TBD	
			0	0	TBD in preparatory phase with MoE	Teacher curriculum	
		<p>Capacity development plan developed</p> <p># of MoE staff able to XXX (priorities to be identified in consultation with MoE)</p> <p># of CEOs, DEOs, School Principals able to effectively submit quality monitoring report regularly</p>	0	0	Capacity development plan available <p>TBD in preparatory phase</p>	Training reports and TBD <p>Validation meeting report</p> <p>Training reports; TBD</p>	
			0	0	TBD in preparatory phase with MoE		
			0	0	TBD in preparatory phase with MoE	Verification missions; Field assessment reports by MoE and UNICEF	
		<p>Number of facilities renovated</p>	0	0	TBD in preparatory phase with MoE		