

Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) Project

Terms of Reference for the Engagement of a Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) Firm

Introduction and Background

The proposed Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) Project aims to lay the foundation for a long-term engagement on adolescent girls' education and empowerment.

Over time, the Nigerian government has invested much in human capacity development through projects aimed specifically at alleviating poverty and unemployment through provision of quality and inclusive primary & secondary education and economic empowerment. The current AGILE project is another investment to this regard.

The relevance of Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) as part of monitoring and evaluation in project implementation is critical to the success and impact of any project. The use of TPM allows organizations and project implementers to monitor projects that are inaccessible to their own staff for various reasons (or deliberately made so for independent assessment and opinion). It also helps provide an independent perspective on project performance. TPM can be used to augment existing monitoring capacities of the implementing organizations and partners. It can also be used to monitor projects that are considered to be high risk, critical or contentious.

Conducting TPM involves taking necessary steps and actions involving identification of information and reporting requirements, coverage areas and frequency of monitoring, training and capacity building, integration with any existing monitoring framework, pilot exercises, validation of findings/reported achieved results and utilization of results. A major characteristic peculiar to project implementation is that it has a definite life span – a start time and an end time, objectives, overall goals, expected outputs, outcomes and an inbuilt monitoring framework.

In most cases, a project is termed to be effective and successful when the TPM report collaborates with the internal report and falls within the agreed M&E framework and the Project Development Objective (PDO).

Conducting a TPM requires time, technical capacity, requisite experience, knowledge of the scope of the project, understanding of the PAD and PIM, understanding of the project goal and core objectives, the budget line as well as the duration.

Rationale

In line with global best practice in project management, and a commitment for effective implementation of AGILE, the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) through the National Project Coordinating Unit (NPCU) will ensure an effective Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) exercise for AGILE to accommodate independent monitoring, assessment, and report.

There are several interrelated efficiency and equity arguments that justify public investment in Girls Secondary Education and Empowerment such as alleviating supply-side barriers under limited private sector involvement; mitigating impacts of information asymmetry; addressing the effects of poverty and credit market constraints; capturing positive externalities of girls' education; and promoting social and economic equity.

Based on these, conducting a third-party monitoring approach will enable cutting-edge Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) approaches to be embedded into the AGILE Project system and also provide a boost to the low M&E capacity (human resources, systems, and technology) within the implementing agencies at Federal, State and Community levels.

Objectives of the Assignment

The key objective of this assignment is to appoint a firm as a Third-Party Monitor (TPM) to provide necessary monitoring services and verify the completion of works and services executed across the seven participating States in the AGILE project: Borno, Ekiti, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Plateau (7 initials States), Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Jigawa, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara (11 additional States) as outlined in Results Framework of the Program Appraisal Document (PAD), the Program Implementation Manual (PIM), and all other relevant project documents.

Scope of the Assignment

To achieve the objectives, the scope of work of the TPM include but not limited to the following:

- Prepare and submit an inception report, including a methodology with the digital tools/instruments to be used for data collection and data management that are suitable for hard-to-supervise areas.
- Perform the TPM of the project identifying issues with quality, pace of progress, quantity, and suggest mitigations on a monthly basis. The TPM processes and exercise will consider each state's peculiarity in terms of quantum and type of intervention approved for each state in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and Project Implementation Manual (PIM).
- Visit construction sites to review physical and financial progress of all construction being funded under the project and pay specific attention to standards, as stipulated in the school construction/renovation manual and the quality of construction and deviations, if any. Special monitoring will be conducted on School Improvement Grant (SIG), including the efficient and transparent allocation of contracts, use of funds by School-Based Management Committees (SBMC) and execution of activities.
- Monitor the provision of life-skills and digital-skills training programmes in selected schools.
- Monitor the provision of conditional cash transfer to project beneficiaries
- Monitor all project activities across components and sub-components as contained in the PAD and PIM
- Conduct the final verification of project civil works and other key intermediate outputs on the result framework, specifying if they have been completed and delivered according to the specifications both in terms of quality and quantity.
- Prepare and submit to the draft and client final verification reports.

Tasks/Activities and Responsibilities

- A. Develop an inception report stating the understanding of the project and a detailed work plan, including the team structure, roles, and activities to be performed during the first 24 months. These documents will include a methodology and digital tools/instruments to be used for data collection and data management. Additionally, it will contain the criteria for the ongoing monitoring and final verification/ of the activities and outputs covered under the project;
- B. Produce TPM templates for monitoring reports (monthly and quarterly), the client final verification reports, and their integration to the offline/online platform, by using ICT solutions for each subcomponent of the project (such as GEMS, Iterative Beneficiary Monitoring, etc.);
- C. Create a Management Information System (MIS), which would work as an online/offline monitoring platform and allows record TPM findings, completion of works and services executed by the project, issues, and mitigation proposals on real time basis, by integrating with selected ICT solutions. The MIS would also allow secured access to States for reviewing and uploading of mitigations for TPM consideration and approval;

- D. Conduct practical training workshops in the use of the TPM digital monitoring platforms to the NPCU and SPIUs;
- E. Conduct a comprehensive TPM exercise to assess the timely and proper execution of the Project, as well as its effectiveness and efficiency towards achieving the PDO and PDO indicators, as included in the PAD and PIM. Additional specific tasks are included in Annex 1;
- F. Conduct monthly meetings with M&E Officers from the NPCU and SPIUs to review TPM findings and propose mitigation actions; and
- G. Produce Quarterly and Six-monthly progress reports, including a summary the state of the project implementation with recommendations for policymakers, and a list of finalized and verified works and services. Present reports before the NPCU and the World Bank.

Reporting and Deliverables

The consultant would prepare reports in English and provide digital and hard copies of the key reports to the Government and the World Bank.

- A. Presentation/Submission of an inception report.
- B. Documentation on training workshops in the use of the digital monitoring platforms provided (MIS).
- C. Monthly reports on the tasks/activities conducted, according to the Tasks/Activities and Responsibilities above mentioned. The format of the reports and the analysis to be included the reports will be agreed with respective component leads in the World Bank.
- D. Quarterly and Six-monthly progress reports to the NPCU and the World Bank.
- E. Quarterly client verification reports.
- F. Contract Completion Report.

Supervision and Coordination

- Except otherwise indicated, the independent Third-Party Monitoring firm is expected to report directly to the National Project Coordination Unit (NPCU) of the Federal Ministry of Education and the World Bank. The specific guidelines (in accordance with supervision, coordination and general responsibilities as contained in the PAD and PIMC) are intended to clarify the precise expectation in terms of the quality of work required.
- The monitoring report templates, and client final verification template shall be proposed by the TPM and approved by the NPCU and the World Bank.
- The TPM will meet regularly with the World Bank, NPCU to discuss the issues and findings of the monitoring and project sites visits and to provide information regarding community feedback on how the activities performed had an impact on their lives.
- The TPM may be asked to prepare and deliver presentations on M&E findings across key subcomponents (such as GBV/SEA/SH monitoring, teacher management etc within AGILE boundaries) especially during the Bank's review missions.
- It is not the role of the TPM to replace the NPCU, SPIUs or other project implementation entities or the Bank's project team.

Qualification Requirements

To perform the requested tasks/activities and achieve the desired objectives of this consultancy, qualifying firms should:

- A. Clearly demonstrate the legal name, organizational structure and indicate explicitly an expression of interest in the assignment as well as demonstrate a clear understanding of the assignment.

B. Be a provider of expert M&E, MIS and operational research services with demonstrable years/projects experience in, preferably, Nigeria or Africa or in developing countries.

C. Have proven experience in providing technical support and advisory services to project M&E units of the Federal and State PIUs, including good practices for greater transparency and improved governance, and developing M&E Systems to ensure that M&E is operational early in the project.

D. Have a proven track record in at least 3 projects financed by international development organizations during the last 5-10 years by providing TPM services including project implementation monitoring according to the project result matrix (including performance indicators for all activities, outcome, and objective, as well as means of verification). TPM services shall also include beneficiary's assessment and monitoring at project communities and LGAs.

E. Possess experience required in the fields of M&E with bias in TPM and planning studies of not less than 10 years.

F. Proven high level of ICT4D proficiency including database management. In view of Covid-19 protocol and restrictions, and due to prevailing security environment, it is pertinent to adopt the use of software such as Kobo Toolbox (a suite of tools for field data collection for use in challenging environment), the use of GPS, Microsoft forms for data collection and storage, etc. Ability to set up and use online platforms such as Microsoft teams, Webex, skype for business, etc.

G. The firm is free to organize its resource as it wishes. However, the minimum qualifications and experience of the consultant's monitoring and evaluation are given in the next section.

Key Staff Requirements

The firm shall provide and avail a team of suitably qualified and experienced personnel. The specialists required shall include but not limited to:

Expertise Required	Minimum Qualifications	Minimum Professional Experience (Years)
Project Manager/ Team Leader	M.Sc degree in the Science, Social Science, Education, Engineering, Management, or other related fields from a recognized institution. Must demonstrate and evidence relevant technical experience and evidence of broad-based experience in the assignment TPM and M&E.	10
Construction Team Lead	Civil engineer degree holder from a recognised university/college	10
Monitoring & Evaluation expert	Degree in social science, education, engineering, or other related fields from a recognized institution and professional experience in Monitoring & Evaluation.	10

GBV Specialist	Experience working on GBV and/or violence against women, Monitoring and Evaluation, developing GBV assessments, gender issues in the education sector, advising on the gender aspects of design and implementation of projects and/or experience in a similar assignment.	8
ICT expert	Degree in Information Technology (IT) and must be proficient in the use of data collection methods (Qualitative/Quantitative, open data kit (ODK), education management information system (EMIS), data analysis, and database management. Knowledge and experience in digital skills training will be an advantage.	7
Communication/ Knowledge Management expert	Degree in communication/ social science with bias in secondary school education for girls or gender. Mass communication in local languages such as Hausa, Yoruba, etc. Must demonstrate and evidence of relevant technical experience in website development/update in large projects.	5
Social Specialist	A Master's Degree in Social Sciences, Education, or relevant field with at least 5 years' experience in social assessment and management, project implementation and capacity building in World Bank supported Project or other International Donor Organization.	5
Data Analyst	Degree in social sciences, statistics, engineering, or other relevant. Must demonstrate and evidence relevant technical experience and evidence of broad-based experience in developing Questionnaire, Data Analysis, data visualization, etc. Any other relevant qualifications or certifications will be of added advantage.	5

Duration of Assignment:

The Contract for the Consultancy will be for 2 years and is expected to commence in March, 2024, or immediately after signing the contract.

Method of Selection:

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Selection Based on Consultants Qualification (CQS) Method set out in the Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers dated July 2016 available and revised November 2017, revised August 2018 on www.worldbank.org/procurement

Estimated Cost:

The total estimated cost of the contractual engagement of a Third Party Monitoring Firm for 2 years is Five Hundred Thousand dollars (\$500,000.00) only.

Payment Schedule:

Apart from the acceptance and approval of final Deliverables/Outputs by the management as stated above, payment shall be in phases and will be made subject to the submission of the following report as indicated in the table below:

S/n.	Description	No. of Copies	% Due for Payment
1	Delivery and acceptance of Inception Report and workplan, 2 weeks from contract signing.	10	10%
2	<u>Evidence of Training of NPCU and the 18 SPIUs M&E Officers, submission of 4 consecutive Monthly reports and Verification report</u>	6	30%
3	Submission of Quarterly reports, additional 4 consecutive Monthly reports and evidence of Training of NPCU and the 18 SPIUs M&E Officers	6	30%
4	Submission of Annual report , 4 consecutive Monthly reports and Verification reports	6	20%
5	Submission and acceptance of end of Contract report	6	10%

Eligibility and How to Apply:

- i. Firms/Service provider meeting the criteria set above are eligible to apply
- ii. The selection method of consulting firms for this assignment will be by Firm/Service Provider Qualification
- iii. All qualified Firms/Service Providers are hereby invited to submit their intentions to undertake this assignment to:

The National Project Coordinator

AGILE Project
Attention: Head of Procurement
National Project Secretariat
Plot 245, Samuel Adesujo Ademulegun Street
Central Business District
FCT – Abuja

Questions on the terms of reference should be addressed by email to agileproject@gmail.com

Annex 1

Specific to be carried out by the TPM include but not limited to the following:

Component 1: Creating Safe and Accessible Learning Spaces

- Study all designs and technical documents before embarking on site visits. Construction drawings, bill of quantity and contract documents related to construction will be provided to TPM by the concerned DPP's.
- Visit each construction site approximately 2 times during construction. The number of visits will be estimated according to the number of constructions to be implemented in each implementing state during the first year. The list of visits for each site would be agreed with the government and the World Bank. During the site visit the TPM would check that:
 - The site is free from all encumbrances
 - All safety precautions as defined in ESS are in place.
 - The grievance redressal mechanism is functioning and make a note of grievances, if any, and details of resolution of the same.
 - The physical progress of work is as per contract document and note reasons of delays if any.
 - Compare the physical progress with the financial progress and point out the gaps if any.
 - The building/s are located as per drawings.
 - There are no honeycombs in concrete, the columns, beams, walls etc. are in proper alignment and workmanship in general is of acceptable standard.
 - The materials used are as per specifications and concrete and mortar mixing is being done using appropriate machines as defined in the contract.
 - The material testing is being conducted as per technical specifications, all test results are acceptable, and proper records are being maintained at site.
 - Basic quality control materials like cube moulds for concrete, jars for testing bulk age of sand, slump test apparatus etc., as defined in the contract agreement are available at site.
 - The contractors' key personnel proposed in the contract are available at site or not.
 - The frequency of visits of Clerk of Works and DPP's zonal and HQ engineers is as per the PIM.
 - The processes for procurement of materials and labour are as per procurement manual and account books are being maintained as per FM manual.

The following have been executed at site as per drawings and specifications for PH works:

- Overhead reservoir and pump-set used for water supply
- The dimensions of the individual structures
- Gradients provided for water-supply and sewage disposal systems
- Positioning of fittings and fixtures
- Floor gradients of the toilets
- Quality of the materials and fixtures used in structures, etc.

The following have been executed at site as per drawings and specifications for electrical works:

- Location of light fittings as per drawings.
- Miniature circuit breakers (MSBs') of proper capacity according to the drawings.
- Load distribution as per drawings.
- Positioning of panel boards, switchboards etc.
- Earth continuity to each metallic portion
- Quality and specification of the items used as per contract.
- Due earth resistance with proper earthing.
- Functioning of lightning arrester system with proper continuity.

In addition to the above, the consultant would:

- Take pictures of the buildings and material at site and record interviews with different stakeholders.
- Issue on the spot instruction if any life-threatening issues are noted with the quality of construction and inform the DPP HQ immediately under intimation to SPIU and NPCU. Escalate to World Bank, if and only if no action is taken by SPIU and NPCU.
- Monitor and supervise SBMCs' transparency and correct procurement for SIGs and the correct use/ release of funds.
- Review the financial records of use of AGILE funds to SBMCs.
- Deviation Tracker: The TPM would prepare a deviation tracker for each site based on its site observations, which would be updated after deviations are reported and fixed by the Clerk of Works. This updated deviation tracker would be annexed to each monthly report.
- Community Monitor (CM): SPIU's would appoint a CM (a person from the community) who would be given basic training on reporting status of works at site through pictures and verbally recorded messages. These would be communicated to the data centre to be set up by the TPM at its HQ, where the pictures and data sent by the CM would be compiled and the progress will be monitored. The TPM would report the concerns if any and other findings as an annex to the monthly progress report.

Subcomponent 2.1. Promoting social and behavioral change through communication campaigns and engagements with religious/traditional leaders and advocacy

- Propose monitoring mechanism for federal and state-level communication campaign activities in participating communities.
- In all cases, visits and research will be estimated based on the number of beneficiary-community target groups in each implementing state during the first two year.

Subcomponent 2.2. Delivery of life skills training and digital literacy programs

- Receive, validate and analyze state-level documentation on training of trainers (ToT) and female counselors for the life skills training during the first year.
- Receive, validate and analyze state-level documentation related to the delivery of life skills and digital skills training and conduct spot checks to validate their effective delivery during the first year in at least 25% of the implementing schools across participating states, by combining the use of geo tagging images and digital surveys.
- Estimate attendance rates for both the safe spaces and the digital skills sessions.
- Verify that the computer labs have the necessary equipment and appropriate devices, especially when their acquisition has been made with resources from the project.
- Verify that the remote learning platform is functional and reaches the beneficiaries.
- Conduct monitoring that safe spaces classrooms and computers-/digital devices are in place and well-maintained.
- In all cases, visits will be estimated based on the number of beneficiaries schools in each implementing state during the first year.

Subcomponent 2.3 Providing financial incentives to the poorest households

- Engage with SPIUs and NPCU to validate beneficiaries' selection according to the implementation guidelines by using random sampling.
- Monitor the effective disbursement of cash transfers to the allocated beneficiaries and evaluate the program, by using the Iterative Beneficiary Monitoring approach.
- Conduct quarterly consultations with community stakeholders to raise fairness concerns, malpractice, etc. A risk-based approach will be used to select LGAs/schools.

