

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SCREENING, ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION FOR INCLUSIVE WELLBEING FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITIES IN SOMALIA

I. Background Information

Many contexts, even where there is political will to provide educational support to children with special learning needs, often lack sufficient processes and systems to do so. While overarching teaching strategies, such as universal design for learning, response to intervention, and differentiated instruction, can help all children learn, teachers who understand each child's needs, including the needs of children with disabilities, can better help them learn. Therefore, identification, coupled with targeted follow-up, is essential to promoting quality education for all.

Disability and poverty are deeply interrelated factors, and many with disabilities face rampant exclusion from education, the workforce, and social and civic participation. Without identification, a child may struggle to learn to read due to visual acuity problems that are easily correctable with proper eyeglasses. Children with “invisible” disabilities, such as cognitive or emotional impairments, are particularly likely to go unidentified and may be branded as struggling learners, possibly discouraging interest in school, disincentivizing continued investment in education by resource-strapped families, and ultimately leading to school dropout. Indeed, an estimated 90% of children with disabilities are recorded to be out of school in developing countries.

The need to prioritize inclusive education beyond the boundaries of the school and classroom is real. A holistic and systematic approach is critical to strengthening technical and institutional capacities of the MOEs to effectively deliver educational services to most of the marginalized groups who include out-of-school children and children with special needs. There is commitment to Inclusive Education under the broad approach of Child-Friendly Schools (CFS). However, even though the CFS approach can commendably improve teaching practices and attitudes of learners, some barriers are unique to children with special needs and cannot always be resolved through general improvements alone. There is an overall challenge to the national education system on the means to meet the education needs of children with disabilities and specifically, policy gaps which have not spelt out among other critical aspects, how to adequately address learning and participation needs of students with disabilities; qualifications for special needs education teachers; safety and accessibility of the learning environment for children with special needs.

II. The Gap in Special Education Needs and Disability

Education for All (EFA) is a global goal. Providing education as a right is an obligation of all governments and requires that they translate their national commitments into legislation. This goal will only be achieved when the universal right to education extends to individuals with special needs and the marginalized in their different distributions. Provision of quality education that addresses the unique learning needs of the child occasioned by their impairment need to be complemented by an accessible and accommodating environment that enables learning to take place. This in part includes promoting learning activities for persons with special needs in mainstream schools; rethinking infrastructural facilities for children with disabilities; provision of teaching and learning materials that are effective to teachers and learners and proper engagement of inclusive education assessors to determine the quality of learning outcomes.

Inclusive education seeks to transform schools and other centres of learning to cater for learning needs of all children who include boys and girls, IDPs, rural populations, children from ethnic minorities, children with disabilities and difficulties in learning and to provide learning opportunities for all youth and adults as well. Inclusive education aims to eliminate exclusion that is a consequence of negative attitudes and a lack of response to diversity in race, economic status, social class, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, and ability. Inclusive education is central to the achievement of high-quality education to develop more inclusive societies founded on social equity. Attention therefore needs to be paid to learners who attend

school and excluded from learning that they do not only complete the full cycle of primary education but also miss out on quality education.

Despite children with disabilities being readily identifiable, the statistics of such children is not readily available. This therefore means that this group of children among other marginalized children are largely excluded from formal learning opportunities. It is therefore imperative that policy instruments are needed to initiate action and advocacy for inclusive and special needs education. Responsive policy will help guide the reforms agenda through robust regulatory framework that safeguard against overt or covert barriers that block children's access to quality education and retention in the school. It is important that in the interest of meeting educational needs for all, we seek to facilitate conducive learning environment for all children including learners with special needs and disabilities to have equal access to quality and relevant education and training.

III. Rationale for SEND Interventions

Children with disabilities are still combating blatant educational exclusion. The number of such children remains undocumented in Somalia. Working children, children in IDPs, rural populations, nomadic children and orphans are among other vulnerable groups. In all these cases of vulnerability, the issue of gender remains to be very significant. It is of crucial importance that all children and young people have access to education and fully participate in school life to achieve the desired outcomes from their learning experiences. Learning opportunities need to be provided to adults as well simply because the ultimate goal of inclusion in education is premised on an individual's effective participation in the society and harnessing their abilities to reach their full potential.

The availability of a comprehensive assessment process for young children with delays or disabilities is an integral component of high-quality early intervention (EI) and early childhood special education services for children from birth. To implement recommended assessment practices, early childhood and education practitioners must consider the purposes of assessment, guidelines for conducting appropriate assessment and strategies for linking initial assessment with program planning, implementation, and progress monitoring. Therefore, the characteristics of assessment for the purposes of screening, eligibility determination, program planning and implementation, and progress monitoring is critical to educational needs of the child. The assessment processes must be designed to meet the individual needs of children with disabilities as well as provide children with optimal learning experiences.

IV. Consultancy Objective

The objective of the assignment is to gather information for decision-making and intervention in the following four areas:

- i. Screening.
- ii. Recommending intervention.
- iii. Individual program planning and implementation.
- iv. Progress monitoring and evaluation.

V. Scope of Work

Assessment teams must consider the purpose of each assessment and gather initial information at the onset of the process. The following are some general considerations, which will vary depending on the purpose of the assessment.

- What is the purpose of this assessment, or why is it being conducted (for example, screening, recommending intervention, program planning and implementation, progress monitoring, program evaluation)?
- What are the characteristics of the child (for example, age, physical abilities, communication skills, temperament, delay or disability)?
- Who will take the lead or coordinate the assessment (for example, early childhood special educator, physical therapist, speech–language pathologist)?
- Where will the assessment sessions take place (for example, home, childcare program, classroom, playground)?

- Who will be involved in the assessment (for example, parents, other family members, early childhood special educator, related service practitioners), and what roles will these individuals assume (for example, facilitator, observer, assessor)?
- When will the assessment sessions take place (for example, in the morning, after child's nap)?
- How will the assessment be conducted (for example, formal testing, observation, interview)?
- What areas of development or content will be assessed? Will all integrated developmental domains or content areas be the focus of the assessment?
- What assessment instrument(s) will be used (for example, formal test, observational checklist, play-based measure, family interview)?
- How will the assessment area(s) be set up (for example, amount of space needed, equipment or materials needed)?
- What skills or behaviors are important to the child's family, and what are the family's priorities (for example, walking, talking, social skills, eating, toileting, literacy)?
- What skills or behaviors are important to the child in his or her environment (for example, communicating, toileting, turn-taking, following directions)?
- What adaptations are necessary for the child to display optimal skills (for example, use of an alternative communication system, adaptive seating, assistive technology)?

VI. Deliverables

The following services and outputs are expected:

- Detailed work plan for undertaking the assessment.
- Assessment Report and Debrief on the findings
- Proposed intervention e.g. (type of equipment, availability, estimated price) other recommended support.
- Workplan on the way forward

VII. Supervision and Management

ADRA Somalia

VIII. Timeframe: The assignment will be conducted over a duration of **40 days** during the months of December 2025 and January 2026.

Proposals should include:

- Detailed description of proposed approach and methodology
- Projected budget – including projected travel and in-country accommodation and subsistence costs.
- Short overview of how the candidate (s) meets the qualifications, experience and skills requirements

IX. Submission of Proposals

In order to achieve the objectives of the assignment, the consultant will be expected to take complete responsibility for all the activities identified in the TOR. The Technical Proposal should contain a complete description and explanation of the proposed methodology for the Assignment (work plan), timelines and any other resources that the consultant will make available to effectively execute the assignment.

The Financial Proposal should stipulate the professional fees, travel, taxes, etc for the assignment. All fee and costs are to be expressed in USD.

X. How to Apply

Applications for this consultancy should be emailed to the Human Resource Manager using the email hr@adrasom.org on or before COB 30th November 2025, with “**Expression of Interest for Disability Assessment and Intervention**” in the subject line.