



LITERACY AND ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (Labe) CONSULTANCY TERMS OF REFERENCE - **ADDEDUM**

Project Title	Integrated Support for Parenting, Inclusive Readiness and Early-learning
Project Duration	3 years
Project Dates	1 st January 2023 – 31 st December 2025
Donor	Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
Study Districts	Koboko, Obongi and Terego
Study Type	Project Endline Evaluation - External
Study Sites	Home Learning Centres (HLCs)

Note: List of Acronyms has been provided on the last page

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT:

Literacy and Adult Basic Education (Labe) is an indigenous organization established in 1989. We are a registered NGO under registration number INDP10721197NB. Labe exists to promote literacy practices and increase access to information particularly among women and children in local communities in order to actively demand and protect their rights. We are currently implementing educational projects focusing on children and parents in districts of; Gulu, Nwoya, Koboko, Obongi, Adjumani and Terego. Labe works with and through partnerships to innovate, implement and influence educational policies. One of our innovations that the Ministry of Education and Sports is considering for scale up is the multi-generational **Family Basic Education** (FABE) approach. The approach promotes direct parental involvement in children's education and parents' literacy skills.

2. ABOUT THE InSPIRE PROJECT

The **InSPIRE** project is a 3-year project funded by Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. InSPIRE aimed to enhance equitable access to quality home-based ECD for marginalised children 3-5 years unreached by formal ECD services across the districts of Koboko, Obongi and Terego. The project uses a **2-generation approach** to implementation and activities focused on;

- i) Improving both *child school readiness* and *readiness of schools'* aspects which enable smooth transition from ECD to primary education. *Child school readiness* activities were undertaken at the family and community levels through the three main strands of Labe's Home Based ECD provision i.e., parent-led, peer-led and parent-led. While non-formal and play-based, the approach mirrors key aspects of formal centre-based ECD but offers greater flexibility.

- ii) *Improving childcare and household livelihoods* through strengthening families' ability to support children's development through education, healthcare and nutrition. Activities target caregivers (parents, grandparents, guardians) with parenting and childcare sessions, VSLA-related interventions such as financial literacy training, start-up grants, mentoring and micro-enterprise support.

This multi-pronged strategy was adopted to provide a comprehensive and sustainable set of interventions delivering a two-generation, long-term solution to critical ECD and education challenges in these marginalized settings.

i) **ABOUT THE 2-GENERATION APPROACH**

InSPIRE uses a unique two-generation approach – reaching young children and adult caregivers (parents). This approach recognizes that children's educational development and growth is greatly influenced by the economic status of the households in which they live. Meanwhile, their parents experience significant challenges, including stress, as they work to provide education and care. They often are forced to make difficult decisions about how to use finite resources. These parents therefore require support during the pivotal early years of their children's lives to provide nurturing care within the household, in addition to having access to quality early childhood care and development services (ECCD) in their community.

Therefore, InSPIRE sought to deeply integrate the 2-generational approach into its Home Based ECD model to address local challenges with sustainable, community driven solutions through a set of interrelated activities at HLCs and at home.

Based on learnings that emphasize the deep connections between household financial stability and healthy child development and education, we believe that simultaneous investments in the economic potential of households and the wider ECCD system will simultaneously improve the demand and supply of ECCD services and quality of nurturing care young children receive within their homes. Therefore, at the community level, the project works with home-based learning centres, i.e., HLCs to create an enabling environment for children to access early learning through LABE's Home Based ECD model and support parents through livelihood led activities like financial literacy trainings, VSLAs and providing financial capital.

ii) **PROJECT SCOPE**

The project has the following key objectives

Objective 1: *Increase engagement of households in gainful microenterprises to meet their family needs*

The home-based ECD model delivered at HLCs is a holistic approach premised on community self-help ideas. It embraces family livelihoods strengthening through HLC-VSLA mechanisms. We have learnt during this period that it is critical to address pressing

family livelihood needs so that parents/caregivers are able to meet their children's daily basic needs including early learning. Without improving the family socio-economic status, parents cannot adequately facilitate early learning support in homes or at the HLCs, neither can they meet other children's daily basic needs. Through HLC-VSLAs we have encouraged parents to make weekly savings to invest in family businesses.

Key Activities:

- *Deliver Financial literacy and Business skills training as part of a Parent education package.*
- *Provide start-up funding to individuals or groups having business ideas with high complementarity to ECD*

Objective 2: *Boost literate environments and literacy practices in homes*

The InSPIRE project was conceived to respond to lessons we have acquired during implementation of similar home-based ECD interventions which use '*whole family and intergenerational learning*' approaches. During the COVID-19 pandemic school closures, we learned how caregivers and older siblings of all education levels can play vital roles to support development of school readiness activities that build verbal, motor and pre-literacy skills for pre-schoolers in the absence of formal ECD learning. We equipped caregivers and older siblings with guidance through leaflets and activity sheets on areas such as how to read with your child even if you cannot read.

Key Activities

- *Facilitate Caregivers, PEs and Young Facilitators-YFs (older children's siblings) to conduct weekly learning and activity sessions*
- *Initiate live radio programmes to encourage reading and cultivate a love for books*

Objective 3: *Link HLCs and schools to smoothen children's transition between the two settings*

Based on our work with families and schools since 2010, we have established that children's long-term success in school derives from their learning experiences before school, and the ongoing learning environment in the early school years. We now know that a successful transition to school results in children who like school, look forward to going there regularly, and showing steady growth in academic and social skills. However, we have seen 6-year-old school-ready children from some of our HLCs dropping out of primary by end of their first year and opting to come back to HLCs where learning environments seem friendlier to them.

LABE will work closely with primary school management to address the administrative-related discontinuities and with teachers on pedagogy-related ones, to provide interconnected support to all children and their families to increase children's continuous learning in primary school.

Key Activities

- *Organise annual creative children books writers' workshops for teachers*
- *Support meetings of Headteachers and School Management Committee members with parents at HLCs*

Objective 4: Support expanded access to quality home-based ECD services to children in new sites

There is increasing expression of interest for home-based ECD by new adopters. Similarly, on-going research on LABE's child-to-child approach by a consortium of universities in Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Malawi has the potential to elicit more interest. LABE has developed some products like the ECD teaching toolkit, aligned to the national complementary ECD learning framework. We would like to build and use a social enterprise approach through selling our created ECD products and consultancy training services to new adopters. Using a cross-subsidy model, we will offer our products and services with differentiated pricing based on customer type (new adopter) and their ability to pay.

Key Activities

- *Develop a business plan for LABE as a social enterprise*
- *Develop context-specific home-based ECD resources for new adopters*

Objective 5: Advocacy for recognition of child-centred non-formal ECD

LABE uses a non-formal home-based ECD model which draws mostly from a play-based pedagogy based on children's local oral literacy. Yet a 2019 study by Makerere University on teachers' perceptions towards play-based pedagogy noted that some pre-school teachers regarded play-material making as wastage of time. Some schools have concentrated more on academics rather than play, which has resulted into non-holistic development among pre-school and primary school children. As a result, play-based pedagogies used in non-formal ECD are regarded as inferior to the formal academic-oriented ECD.

Key Activity

- *Engage local champions to support advocacy of project interventions*

iii) PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the final evaluation is to assess the extent to which the delivery of the project delivered on its planned outcomes and overall impact against its intended goals. This will include changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviours resulting from the different project interventions.

The specific objectives of the endline evaluation are:

1. To assess the extent to which the project outcomes and outputs were achieved in comparison to the baseline and project design. The assessment should also study the internal and external factors that influenced the project implementation.
2. To assess the application of the two-generation approach within the project, determine how it has contributed to achieving project results, and provide recommendations for its future use.
3. To capture and document evidence-based lessons, best practices, challenges and recommendations that LABE can apply to improve the implementation of its program for affected communities in the future
4. To assess unintended effects and consequences that may have resulted from the implementation of the project in all target areas

Based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, it is expected that the evaluation questions could be answered while addressing the following criteria:

- **Relevance** for meeting the targeted beneficiaries' needs, interests, and expectations.
- **Effectiveness** of the project activities in achieving the project objectives, the relation between input/resources and the results achieved on the output, outcome and impact level as relevant.
- **Sustainability**
 - (a) the extent to which project results, and effects/benefits are expected to continue after the donor intervention has ended.
 - (b) the extent to which the project supported institutional capacity building will continue to contribute to the emergency response and building the resilience, how realistic was the project's approach in achieving sustainable results for beneficiaries, particularly into its collaboration with internal and external stakeholders.
- **Efficiency:** Were the objectives achieved in a cost-efficient manner by the project implementation? Were there any alternatives for achieving the same results with less resources
- **Coherency:** How the project implementation was consistent with policies and government programs and interventions as well as the complementary role of government and partners.
- **Impact:** How participation in the project affected the lives of the targeted clients, what changes did they notice positive and negative), what kind of skills or abilities did they acquire and how they have benefited from them,

how they intend to use the acquired skills to deal with future challenges. The impact can also be assessed through analyzing the project impact indicators as outlines below.

iv) **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following guiding principles and values should be applied during the final evaluation as much as possible:

- **Usefulness:** Final evaluation findings must be articulated clearly and in a way that maximizes the potential for these findings to inform decision-making.
- **Representativeness:** The evaluation should strive to include a wide range of beneficiaries, including different gender roles, age groups, ethnic groups and locations (e.g. refugee and host) as relevant to the project.
- **Sensitivity to Gender:** The evaluation must be gender sensitive and, where possible, try to assess i) the intended or unintended effects of the project on gender relations and ii) how gender-sensitive outcomes have been addressed in the program workplan and intervention implementation. The evaluation should go beyond disaggregation to look at how women and men engage differently with the project and data gathering methods should take gender considerations into account.
- **Disability sensitivity:** The evaluation must consider issues of mental and physical disability and, where possible, assess the intended or unintended effects of the project on those living with a disability.
- **Accountability:** The most vulnerable targeted by the project must be able to input and/or feedback into the design and management of the review.
- **Ethical principles:** The evaluation team should adhere to the highest standards of integrity using standard ethical principles and practices for research and evaluation

v) **SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION:**

The evaluation activities will cover a representative sample of InSPIRE project interventions and locations in Koboko, Obongi and Terego districts. The study focuses on gathering information on various result levels of the project using these approaches (though not limited to).

Use Existing Outcome Data

- The consultant will draw on the already compiled outcome data in the PMT as the primary source of evidence on progress.

Validation & Triangulation Data

- **Key Informant Interviews** with Parent Educators, HLC Management Committee members, VSLA management committee members, community, district and subcounty officials, and LABE staff to validate implementation progress.
- **Focus Group Discussions** with parents, caregivers and VSLA groups to explore perceptions of service quality, inclusion (especially of children with disabilities), and changes in practices.
- **Structured Observations** of a sample ECD-, VSLA-, caregiving-, training-, parenting sessions, etc. to assess fidelity to the model, quality of facilitation, and use of materials e.g. the ECD Toolkit.
- **Review of Routine Records** e.g., HLCMC meeting minutes, VSLA savings logs and other records) to corroborate reported results.

a) Geographical Scope: Regarding the geographical scope, the endline survey will cover districts in the Koboko, Terego and Obong districts

b) Content scope: Of content scope, the major aim and purpose of the endline survey is to assess the outcomes and overall impact against the intended goal

The following **stakeholders and beneficiaries** should be consulted:

- LABE staff
- Parent Educators
- Parents
- HLCMC members
- District and Subcounty officials
- Financial Literacy trainers
- Home based ECD Model Adopters
- National level officials like MoES officials
- Partners like NECDA

The following are the key respondents of the study who must be reached through the study

#	Target	Target Population	Sample
1	Districts	3	3
2	Parent Educators	86	40
3	HLC Management Committees	43	25
4	VSLA Management Committees	40	15
5	Schools	27	10
6	District Officials	28	10
7	Government officials	12	5

c) **Time scope:** Regarding time scope, this end-minded survey will have to be completed within 21-30 working days from the date of contract signing.

vi) **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The final evaluation methodology will be determined by LABE in consultation with selected evaluation team based on the evaluation scope and evaluation criteria listed above. Nonetheless, it is expected that the team will use a mixed methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative data gathering and analysis techniques.

- As part of the evaluation design, the selected evaluation team will refine the final evaluation proposal including the methodology in consultation with LABE for final approval.
- Propose a set of tools to be used to collect data from the different respondents to generate personal perspective on what worked and what could be improved.
- The proposed methodology should also consider several case studies to explore the project's outcome on individual, household, and community levels.
- The methods and assessment frameworks employed for this review should facilitate the collection and analysis of data and be relevant to the scope of questions.

Suggested sources that will be used in the evaluation would, at a minimum, include:

- **Desk review:** Review of key documents. A table of key project documents will be provided by LABE to the reviewer with further assistance available if required.
- **Literature reviews** from government documents such as 2023 ECD policy, and family involvement in basic education practices elsewhere among others.
- **Project Workplan** with the details of activities that were planned and agreed with Conrad N. Hilton to be implemented throughout the life of the project.
- **Inception meetings** with LABE staff (at head office) to develop a detailed understanding of LABE, its operations, implementation structure, the project, etc.
- **Field visits:** The evaluation team will conduct field visits to selected project locations (Koboko, Terego and Obongi) to (not limited):
 - *Interview LABE field-based staff* to gather information on achievements and impact and difficulties faced during implementation, including management, monitoring and reporting.
 - *Observe project activities* like learning sessions, training sessions, VSLA sessions, etc. to develop a detailed understanding of the day-to-day implementation of activities.
 - *Focus Group Discussions and Interviews* with key project stakeholders and beneficiaries to answer the evaluation questions and also to further

understand the relevancy, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of the project interventions.

- *Collect qualitative and quantitative data* to answer the evaluation objectives.
- *Develop case studies* that reflect the impact and outcome that InSPIRE project programming has had on individual beneficiaries or households.

The following **documents** should be examined as part of the Final Evaluation:

- a. The approved project proposal document
- b. The Project Measures Table
- c. Pre-school Children's Readiness Assessments Results
- d. Project Surveys
- e. Year 1 and 2 Annual Reports including financial information
- f. Any other relevant documentation

vii) SPECIFIC TASKS/SCOPE OF WORK

- a) Develop and present an inception report to LABE, indicating interpretation of the TORs and methodology.
- b) Refine the study questions and indicate the tools/ study instruments
- c) Propose a complete implementation/work plan with time frame.
- d) Prepare a resource list and an implementation budget.
- e) Undertake the study of the above-mentioned objectives/ questions and document findings

viii) KEY OUTPUTS:

The consultant will be expected to produce;

- Present a preliminary overview of their findings to LABE before preparing the report. This will be validation exercise with (not limited to) a PowerPoint presentation to key stakeholders including LABE staff to provide feedback and clarify pending questions.
- Consultants should submit the draft reports to LABE for written comments before finalising, with at least three rounds of revisions based on feedback, to minimise the chances of inaccuracies and to maximize ownership of the findings. LABE's MEL Manager will coordinate this process throughout the evaluation.
- At least 3 case studies documenting key stories about project change
- Set of tools used (word or electronic)
- Final data set(s) used to produce results
- Analysis sheets e.g., tables, graphs, charts, etc.
- A catalogue of photographs, audio, videos and any other products compiled from the field

The Final Evaluation should result in

- i) **Final Evaluation Report** of no more than 50 pages for the main body, including an Executive Summary. The report should address the areas listed in this TOR. The report should include a good level of critical analysis and the report's authors should support their analysis of a project's achievements with relevant data and state how this has been sourced. Recommendations should also include details as to how they might be implemented
- ii) Final Evaluation Summary Report in PowerPoint format
- iii) Final Evaluation Summary Report in word (5-10 pages)
- iv) Presentation(s) of final evaluation report in person and/or hybrid to stakeholders
- v) A policy brief about 5-8 pages

Report Structure:

The consultant shall propose an adequate report structure in view of the different components of the study, and the respective findings and analysis including graphs, tables, infographics and text as suitable and required. An analysis plan should also be submitted as well. However, regardless of the report structure adopted, it should not miss the following

- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Methodology
- Findings of the study in relation to the objectives, study questions, theory of Change and other areas emerging
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Feedback, perspectives and observations from various stakeholders shared during the validation sessions - that were not documented in the initial main report.
- Appendix- list of documents reviewed, case studies, people and organizations interviewed, and final agreed TORs

ix) TIME FRAME

The whole evaluation process including data collection, analysis and sharing findings will be conducted within 3 weeks (21 days) and is expected to begin on **27th October 2025** and be completed not later than 30th November 2025.

NB. If external conditions hamper the study process, affecting the work plan, the consultant will work with LABE to find possible relevant solutions to guarantee the accomplishment of the assignment.

x) ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND SAFEGUARDING

- The consultant will be required to adhere to the LABE Safeguarding policies such as Child protection, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. These policies will apply during the selection of the consultant and throughout the study.
- All names of individuals will be anonymized to protect the confidentiality of answers. Analysis and reports will be written carefully and checked closely to ensure this is maintained.
- Participation in the evaluation will be voluntary, and no compensation will be provided for participation except for participants in the FGDs who **might** be provided with a soft drink, but this will be decided by the consultant.

xi) PROPOSED TEAM

Lead: Independent consultant/firm

Evaluation Coordinator: LABE's MEL Manager

xii) REQUIRED RESPONSE TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Interested consulting firms or individuals should submit a technical and financial proposal based on the terms of reference.

- Technical profile of the firm/consultant. (Not more than 2 pages -other information can be included as annexes including sample copies of relevant work)
- Understanding of the terms of reference as advertised by LABE
- Recommendations to changes or adaptations in the TORs (if any)
- The proposed methodology and approach for data collection and analysis
- Detailed evaluation plan for the exercise and clearly indicating the fieldwork including the staff-days required.
- The proposed composition and roles of the team members. Share the CVs for the consultants as annexes.
- Detailed budget with justification. The external evaluation proposal should include a reasonable detailed budget to cover all costs associated with the evaluation. The detailed budget should include a breakdown of the lead investigator and research assistants' wages and allowances, data collection and field work costs, data transcription and analysis costs, transport, and accommodation for the duration of the evaluation, etc.
- Additionally, provide a list of projects completed in the last 5 years, a minimum of two projects (project name, client, budget and sample report).

Note: The technical proposal carries the largest weight i.e., 85% of the proposal. Therefore, only proposals that meet this threshold will proceed to the final evaluation stage which will constitute 15% of the overall score.

xiii) QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED FOR CONSULTANTS

The preferred consultant must have:

- i. A minimum of a Master's degree in ECD, Social Sciences, Population studies or related field. Preference is given to excellent expertise and qualifications in Early Childhood Development.
- ii. Broad understanding of the education practice in Uganda and worldwide
- iii. A minimum of 7 years of relevant research work experience Strong quantitative and qualitative research skills with strong experience in applying mixed research approaches and statistical software.
- iv. Relevance background knowledge on early childhood and inclusive education
- v. Experience in conducting similar evaluations for interventions in refugee populations in Uganda is highly preferred
- vi. Robust understanding of national, regional and international developments in relation to learning studies
- vii. At least 7 years of experience and use of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods (collection and analysis).
- viii. Sound analytical skills to make observations, draw interpretations and identify lessons and recommendations.
- ix. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, both written.
- x. Share sample work done by the firm/consultant in the areas highlighted.

xiv) BUDGET AND LOGISTICS

The consultant is required to provide a holistic budget in both Uganda Shillings (UGX) **and** US Dollars (USD) considering (though not limited to) professional fees, daily fees, travel and transportation, communication, and other logistics as needed, as well as WHT or related taxes

xv) TERMS OF PAYMENT

The total consultant fee will be paid in one tranche upon delivering the approved report.

xvi) REPORTING

The consultant will report to LABE's MEL Manager for the day-to-day management and coordination of the endline evaluation.

xvii) SUBMISSION DETAILS

Submission of Technical and Financial Proposals are due **12th October 2025**. Bids received after this deadline will not be considered. Please submit proposals to jackie@labeuganda.org using subject line (Re): **InSPIRE Project Endline Evaluation**

List of Acronyms

CWDs	Children with Disabilities
ECD	Early Childhood Development
HLC	Home Learning Centre
HLCMC	Home Learning Centre Management Committee
InSPIRE	Integrated Support for Parenting, Inclusive Readiness and Early-learning
LABE	Literacy and Adult Basic Education
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
PEs	Parent Educators
ToRs	Terms of Reference
VSLAs	VSLAs
YF	Young Facilitator