

Terms of Reference for the Children on the Margins (CoM) Kenya Baseline Assessment

Post Title: Baseline Study Consultant
Project Title: Action for Life skills and Values in East Africa (ALiVE)
Organization: Zizi Afrique Foundation
Type of Contract: Consultancy Contract

Background

The vision of the Children on the Margins (CoM) Kenya Programme is to ensure that children living in extreme adversity can reach their full potential and succeed in life. Socio-emotional learning (SEL) is a key focus as it has been proven to benefit all children, especially those experiencing trauma and adversity. Without SEL, children in these situations often struggle to develop in a wholistic way. The programme has adopted a system change approach to influence the education system to mainstream life skills and values in the curriculum and co-curricular activities for targeted schools in arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL). It focuses on strengthening collaboration among system actors and key stakeholders with the aim of realizing an improved agency among children aged 4-15 years in ASAL regions on matters that impact their holistic development. Children from nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are particularly vulnerable to dropping out or missing school altogether, leading to poor learning outcomes and a diminished quality of life.

The CoM Kenya program seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- i. Parents, community leaders and groups (youth, religious, cultural) in Kajiado, Turkana, Isiolo and Wajir Counties have increased awareness and knowledge to nurture life skills and values in children and young people
- ii. School community (learners, teachers, head teachers, parents, BOM) effectively mainstream life skills and values in curriculum and co-curricular activities
- iii. Education and financing system actors (KICD, KNEC, MoE, TSC, National Treasury, Controller of Budget, Parliament Education Committee, CoG, County Governments) collaborate to reinforce the effective and sustainable implementation of life skills and values in the targeted ASAL counties

The program is being implemented across four counties—Isiolo, Kajiado, Wajir, and Turkana—with a collaborative network of 12 partners. Each county has three implementing partners, ensuring localized engagement and impact. Zizi and UNICEF serve as the anchor partners, providing strategic oversight and support, while RELI acts as the convener, facilitating coordination and alignment among stakeholders.

Baseline Study objectives

The baseline study aims to assess how values and life skills are embedded within academic and co-curricular activities in the school community; how community stakeholders including parents, community leaders and groups (youth, religious, cultural) integrate life skills and values in their daily activities; and the levels of collaboration among education and financing system actors (KICD, KNEC, MoE, TSC, National Treasury, Controller of Budget, Parliament Education Committee, CoG, County Governments). This will ensure the CoM initiative remains responsive to the realities of ASAL communities while driving long-term systemic change.

The specific objectives of the baseline study are as follows:

- **Assess existing Values and Life Skills (VALi) awareness and practices in schools and the community** – Establish the current level of understanding (awareness and knowledge), attitudes, and integration of VALi among community stakeholders (leaders and groups), and school community (parents, teachers, learners, BoMs, PAs).
- **Explore system stakeholder collaboration and policy influence landscape** - Map education and financing stakeholders and pinpoint opportunities for strengthening collaboration among the stakeholders while identifying the challenges that may affect the integration of VALi into schools, homes, and broader education system actors and generate insights for developing relevant toolkits and advocacy materials to support engagement with education authorities and institutional partners.

- **Assess school community contexts** – Analyze the socio-economic, infrastructural, and cultural dynamics affecting the education ecosystem of Kajiado, Turkana, Isiolo and Wajir Counties to inform strategies tailored to local realities and inform the design and testing of effective approaches for VALi integration in academic and co-curricular activities.
- **Develop benchmarks for future measurement of project results as stipulated in the ALiVE project MEL framework and CoM Kenya Rubrics** – Provide reference data to track progress and impact over time, ensuring evidence-based adaptation of strategies.

The Scope of work

Zizi Afrique Foundation seeks to engage a consultant to conduct a baseline evaluation of the CoM Kenya programme. Specifically, the selected consultant will be required to undertake the following broad tasks:

1. Undertake a desk review on available literature and project documents to identify information gaps and inform the study methodology and tools. Reference to existing secondary data from different reports will be essential in the process of assembling credible baseline data for the project. The secondary data will serve as a yard stick upon which data generated through the primary sources will be compared and analyzed. Key reference documents which MUST inform the development of primary data collection tools/methods shall include the ALiVE project MEL framework and CoM Kenya MEL Rubrics.
2. Design the baseline study framework, including the methodology and tools for data collection, that ensures all the information to meet the objective of the assessment is captured. The methodology should guarantee the highest degree of rigor to ensure credible findings and recommendations. A mixed method approach is recommended with key data gathering techniques being questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides.
3. Conduct interviews (structured and unstructured) with community leaders and groups (youth, religious, cultural), parents, teachers, learners, BoMs, PAs and education and financing system actors (KICD, KNEC, MoE, TSC, National Treasury, Controller of Budget, Parliament Education Committee, CoG, County Governments) to obtain primary data on the key study questions. Based on discussions with the project implementation partners at inception, detailed potential target groups and individuals will be identified for in depth interviews.
4. Prepare a draft baseline report for the four counties outlining key findings and stakeholder collaboration/networks.
5. Prepare final reports incorporating feedback from CoM program partners and other key project partners like the government officials.

Timeline and Outputs

The proposed workplan is spread between 2nd June 2025 and 27th June 2025

Activity	Proposed End date
1. Develop the assessment framework and draft inception report (including data collection methods and tools)	2nd June 2025
2. Hold a one-day co-creation meeting with partners (UNICEF, Porticus, IPs) to discuss the draft implementation plan, assessment framework and data collection methods and tools for input and concurrence	9th June 2025
3. Field data collection in 4 counties - spread within 2 weeks period	23rd June 2025
4. Data analysis and reporting	27th June 2025
5. Validation of the draft report with partners (1day physical meeting)	4th July 2025

The consultant will work closely with the CoM Kenya program partners and will from time to time submit and share the progress of activities as agreed. The required key outputs will include;

1. Inception report
2. Finalized tools and plans for fieldwork.
3. Fieldwork report highlighting the key findings from the data collected.
4. First draft of the baseline study report
5. Final baseline study report
6. Quantitative and Qualitative data sets

Duties and Responsibilities

Under the overall supervision of the ZAF MEL team, the consultant will do the following:

1. Develop inception report including revised workplan and study framework.
2. Complete a desk review.
3. Carry out interviews with key stakeholders/target groups.
4. Prepare draft report.
5. Finalize the baseline report based on input from stakeholders and program partners.

ZAF will do the following:

1. Provide all necessary documents that may facilitate the work of the consultant
2. Coordinate the assignment.
3. Organize co-creation/consultative meetings with program partners and mobilize respondents for participation

Qualifications

1. **Advanced Degree** – A Master's or higher in Education, Social Sciences, Development Studies, Monitoring & Evaluation, or a related field.
2. **Expertise in Educational Research** – Strong background in education system analysis, policy engagement, and program evaluation.
3. **Experience in ASAL Contexts** – Demonstrated knowledge of Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) education challenges, community engagement, and resilience- building strategies.
4. **Baseline and Evaluation Methodologies** – Proven experience designing and conducting baseline, midline, and endline evaluations using qualitative and quantitative research methods.
5. **Data Collection and Analysis** – Expertise in survey design, participatory assessments, focus group discussions, and stakeholder interviews.
6. **Statistical and Analytical Tools** – Proficiency in SPSS, STATA, NVivo, or other research tools for processing and interpreting data.
7. **Policy and Systems Thinking** – Ability to assess systemic factors and recommend practical strategies for integrating life skills and values in learning activities through Whole School Approach.
8. **Stakeholder Engagement** – Strong ability to collaborate with government agencies, NGOs, educators, and community groups to ensure alignment in program goals.
9. **Report Writing and Presentation** – Excellent skills in synthesizing findings into actionable reports, toolkits, and policy briefs.
10. **Commitment to Equity and Inclusion** – Understanding of gender, cultural, and socio-economic dynamics affecting educational outcomes in ASAL regions.

Application process

Interested consultants should submit a detailed proposal (8 pages max) outlining their understanding of the task, proposed approach, workplan, budget, and CV/profile of key personnel (with at least 3 referees). Please submit by email under the heading '**ALIVE Kenya Baseline Study**' to info@ziziafrique.org and a copy sent to jobs@ziziafrique.org to reach not later than 23rd May, 2025.

The contract terms, deliverables and payments shall be guided by Zizi Afrique Foundation's policy on consultancy assignments.