Terms of Reference for Learning Coordinator for the Comic Relief and Department for International Development (DFiD) funded Trade, Enterprise and Employment Programme

Introduction to the Programme

The Trade, Enterprise & Employment Aid Match Programme (TEE) is an initiative funded by Comic Relief and the Department for International Development (DFiD). The programme has invested £20 million to support enterprise development in 12 countries. The countries include Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Kenya, Sudan, Senegal, Burkina Faso, South Africa, Rwanda, Swaziland and Sierra Leone in Sub-Saharan Africa. Comic Relief has made grants to 22 organisations (projects or funded partners) Most funded partners are INGOs with national offices and local partners, but some are national NGOs, and others are social enterprises, working across various sectors including agriculture, trade, forestry and urban inclusion. The projects are supporting enterprises (small businesses, farmers and producers) towards sustainable growth and to impact positively upon people living in sub-Saharan Africa, with a focus on women and young people.

TEE is expected to achieve three main outcomes. These are:
1. Enterprises adopt sustainable practices to meet local market requirements
2. Local enabling environment changes to support sustainable enterprise development
3. Enterprises develop necessary capacity to support enterprise/their growth.

The programme started in 2014 and will conclude in 2021. By June 2021, the programme is expected to have helped over 380,000 people benefit from improved economic opportunities. To date, 15 projects being implemented by funded partners have closed and 7 are still active. We anticipate that by the time that this work is commissioned, 4 live projects will remain live.

Assignment

Comic Relief is looking for an individual or organisation(s) to act as a Learning Coordinator for the TEE programme for the remainder of the programme between April 2020 and June 2021. This consultant will be responsible for supporting the monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) dimension of the programme. They will provide support at four different levels:

1. **Direct support to funded partners to refine their MEL processes in preparation for final evaluations**

   Comic Relief’s approach is that evaluations should be useful for funded partners and their sectors, focused on learning (rather than proving impact), and analysis of existing project data rather than duplicating it with new data collection. Comic Relief also expects final project evaluations to explore value for money and sustainability along with other OECD evaluation criteria. The Learning Coordinator will provide direct support to funded partners, to ensure they are well-prepared to get the maximum benefit and learning possible from their final evaluations once Comic Relief funding ends.

2. **Facilitating and supporting collective learning between funded partners**

   The Learning Coordinator will work with Comic Relief and funded partners to address cross-cutting thematic and process-oriented learning questions that are of interest to funded partners, Comic Relief, DFID and others working in trade and enterprise.

3. **Develop a final synthesis of learning to demonstrate changes to funded partners’ MEL capacity**

   The Learning Coordinator will develop a final synthesis to highlight learning about effective approaches to MEL capacity development within the context of the TEE programme and include recommendations to Comic Relief and DFID for future programmes. This piece of the assignment will also respond to our agreed deliverable with DFID for our final year of implementation.

4. **Development of learning products and dissemination plan**

   The Learning Coordinator will identify opportunities to develop learning products to evidence and share learning from the TEE programme. The Learning Coordinator will work with Comic Relief and funded partners to develop the learning products, define the format for different audiences and plans for dissemination to target audiences.
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<td>Direct support to funded partners to refine their MEL in preparation for final evaluations</td>
<td>Joint assessment of MEL capacity support requirements</td>
<td>The learning coordinator will work with each funded partner to review their plans for their remaining MEL activities and how they plan to implement the learning into their programmes into the future. The learning co-ordinator will then jointly assess their capacity to carry out these activities. This assessment will inform the areas of technical assistance and approach to be used.</td>
<td>Joint assessment reports of each funded partners’ MEL plans and capacity, summarising consultant’s proposed MEL support approach for each funded partner</td>
<td>Snapshot reports 6 weeks after consultancy contract begins</td>
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<td>Provide MEL technical assistance to funded partners</td>
<td>Support will focus on the remaining live funded partners which have indicated an interest in MEL capacity support. Activities will include but not limited to: 1. Providing MEL advice and troubleshooting support to the staff of funded partner organisations. 2. Supporting funded partners to reflect on and, where necessary, revise relevant MEL frameworks for collecting, analysing and interpreting robust data. These should be done in a way that funded partners get the maximum benefit from the data they have collected to encourage learning within and across projects. In some cases, this will include supporting funded partners to refine frameworks for measuring and reporting on impact to women’s economic empowerment. 3. Supporting funded partners to review and refine evaluation methodology for final evaluations. 4. Reviewing and commenting on drafts of final evaluation reports. 5. Identifying opportunities for funded partners to share learnings between themselves and to the wider public. We anticipate that some funded partners will benefit from more intensive support than others. Workplans will be reviewed regularly to reflect the funded partners’ requirements and adjusted accordingly. This support will be provided remotely due to the geographical locations of the funded partners.</td>
<td>MEL support given to each funded partner, based on the joint assessment report and work plan</td>
<td>Support likely to be given over a rolling basis as needed by funded partners. The final number of days will be agreed after the pre-assessment of funded partners MEL capacity gaps and requirements.</td>
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<td>Post joint assessment of MEL plans and capacity:</td>
<td>The learning co-ordinator will jointly work with funded partners to conduct a follow-up assessment to summarise and document changes in their MEL plans and capacities.</td>
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<td>Joint assessment report for each funded partner, highlighting support given, any changes in their MEL plans and capacity, and with training materials annexed where appropriate</td>
<td>Reports within 1 month after the end of a funded partner’s support period</td>
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<td>Develop final synthesis of learnings and recommendations</td>
<td>The Learning Coordinator will develop an overall synthesis of lessons learned from this consultant and past MEL support and recommendations to help Comic Relief improve future MEL support to funded partners and broader programme design. The process for this could involve (but not limited to) document review, remote meetings/workshops with funded partners and Comic Relief staff. Pending successful completion (or progress towards) of deliverables for one to three, Comic Relief will agree on methodology and work plans for this activity.</td>
<td>An overall final evaluation synthesis of learning about effective approaches to MEL capacity development based on the TEE programme</td>
<td>Documentation to be collated overtime throughout consultancy but final deliverable to be shared with Comic Relief in April 2021</td>
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| Facilitate collective learning among funded partners | At the start-up phase for the TEE programme, an independent consultant conducted a detailed examination of each funded partner’s project outcome indicators and project-level learning questions. The Learning Coordinator will work with Comic Relief and funded partners to refine and validate these learning questions. This could be done through an online consultation process to refine the questions and tailor them to meet the interests of the funded partners, Comic Relief and DFID. This will ensure participation by funded partners in the process as well as to check that questions are still relevant. The coordinator will also ensure that the final learning questions contribute meaningfully to the body of knowledge about the trade and enterprise environment by, for example, using secondary research to assess the relevance/contribution of the learning to the thematic area. The coordinator will then develop a work plan for collective learning activities and facilitate participatory processes to encourage group learning, reflection and analysis to address learning questions. Comic Relief will encourage all funded partners, including those whose grants have ended, to participate in the collective learning activities, but not all funded partners may be willing to participate. | • A participatory session with funded partners to refine and validate learning questions  
• A collective learning workplan  
• Collective learning sessions conducted systematically over the remainder of the programme  
• Documentation of the process including recommendations for future programming | • Learning questions to be finalized within 1 month after consultancy begins  
• Workplan to be developed within 3 months after consultancy begins  
• Learning sessions to be held in agreement with funded partners and Comic Relief  
• Document to be delivered at towards the end of consultancy in April 2021 |
| Development of learning products and dissemination plan | The Learning Coordinator will work with Comic Relief to identify opportunities to develop learning products for the TEE programme. This will include at least 5 MEL case studies, research pieces, tool kits, etc. The Learning Coordinator will be expected to work with grantees in developing these products. The products could detail learning from the collective learning activities as well as individual programme documentation (e.g. project annual reports, evaluations and learning studies). This could be augmented with remote interviews and/or in-country visits to selected projects to collect more information. | • 5 case studies documenting TEE funded partners who have enhanced MEL capacity as a result of Comic Relief’s support and a description of the changes  
• Other learning products to be identified and agreed with Comic Relief  
• A budget for developing and disseminating learning products | 5 MEL case studies to be shared with Comic Relief in April 2021 |
### Dissemination plan

The Learning Coordinator will develop a dissemination plan for learning outputs of this consultancy and the TEE programme in general, with inputs from funded partners and Comic Relief. This plan will detail the products/learnings, who will be responsible for sharing, target dates and target audiences. The Learning Coordinator will agree with Comic Relief the format and timelines for this plan. The channels through which results and learnings will be shared will include (but not limited to) DFID Annual reports; Comic Relief website and social media channels; Relevant conferences, seminars, webinars, workshops, etc will be reviewed on a rolling basis and included in the dissemination plan and; Internal workshops with Comic Relief staff.

A dissemination plan with detailing key persons, target dates, target audiences, identified events (where necessary) and products/learning to be shared

Initial draft to be developed within 3 months of consultancy and refined regularly to include new opportunities/products in agreement with Comic Relief

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| Comic Relief | • Accountability against key partnership commitments with DFID  
• Illustrate examples of progress/challenges with providing MEL support to funded partners (especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and for given thematic areas)  
• Learning to inform the design of future programmes  
• Learning to strengthen grant-making and management practice  
• Learning to inform ongoing co-funding partnership with DFID  
• Identify compelling stories of change for use in Comic Relief communications |
| DFID (co-funding partner) | • Learning/evidence to be shared with relevant programme/policy departments  
• Learning from the Comic Relief partnership to inform future partnerships with Comic Relief and others |
| Funded partners | • Demonstrate organisational progress with MEL  
• Learning to inform future project design and delivery  
• Generate evidence and learning to support future resource mobilisation efforts |
| Other development organisations | • Illustrate examples of how Comic Relief supported MEL capacity development for funded partners |
| Other existing and potential donors – for future funding opportunities | • Evidence of successful partnerships, programmes and what works (and doesn’t)  
• Demonstrate the value and level of impact achievable through multi-country, cross-regional and multi-year programme  
• Insights into the co-funding partnership between Comic Relief and DFID |
Consultancy Management

The selected consultant will be supported by Comic Relief’s Evaluation and Learning Manager and the Partnership Manager (the manager for this programme). The Learning Coordinator will be provided with a ‘project information package’ of key documentation for review. This will include funded partner applications, annual reports, MEL case studies, and write-ups of MEL support requirements and interests from funded partners that were collected during the grant start-up phase and the mid-term evaluation. Both parties will be available for questions and discussions throughout the consultancy.

Timeframe and Budget

Timeframe: April 2020 – June 2021

Given the geographical spread of the grantees, we anticipate that most of the consultancy will be carried out remotely but are open to suggestions.

Budget Available: up to GBP £70,000 (including VAT if applicable) for fees. Payments will be made based on the provision of approved timesheets. Any additional expenses incurred for logistics, travel, etc to deliver approved work plans and activities will be covered by Comic Relief on the provision of original receipts. If additional learning products in addition to the 5 case studies are identified as part of deliverable 4, these will be covered by a separate budget by Comic Relief. This budget will cover the cost of developing the products and all expenses associated with production. The Learning Coordinator will be expected to propose a separate budget for this which will be agreed with Comic Relief.

Value for money is important to Comic Relief and will be considered when analysing the proposals.

Learning Coordinator Specifications

Each funded partner and project is different, so we are seeking an inquisitive, flexible, experienced consultant who can provide advice and troubleshooting support to a range of organisations, adopting a participatory approach. The consultant will need to discuss and agree approaches with funded partners, taking into consideration the type of organisation and their different MEL needs.

It is expected that the successful candidate will have significant experience of:

- supporting organisations to design, implement and use MEL approaches
- leading group learning and facilitating group analysis and reflection, especially using remote channels
- facilitating remote training sessions
- working with organisations involved in enterprise development, specifically in agriculture, trade, small business development, and forestry
- working with international NGOs
- expertise in writing and communicating in an accessible style and format (without jargon)
- developing learning products such as case studies, toolkits and short research pieces
- designing rigorous evaluation methodologies
- working on private sector development and gender

Desirable experience:

- working with social enterprises
- working in any of the TEE programme countries (please see footnote 1)

Comic Relief strongly encourages applications from individuals or organisations based in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The selected Learning Coordinator will be expected to read and comply with Comic Relief’s Safeguarding Framework.

Shortlisting Specification

A response to this document should include (5 pages of A4 max.):

1. A summary of why you are best placed to carry out the work, based on the given specifications
2. Evidence of your experience in this area and examples of other similar work undertaken
3. Based on the specific deliverables, a detailed explanation of your approach to delivering the tasks
4. A proposed workplan for in line with your approach detailing milestones and number of days for each activity
5. Team composition (if applicable) including key personnel roles and responsibilities for this work and their relevant experience
6. The name and contact details of two independent referees.

Annexes should include:
1. An indicative budget for the work to include any overheads/management costs, daily rate etc. including figures for expenses and VAT where appropriate
2. CVs of relevant team members
3. 2 writing samples from recent similar consultancies (including learning products you have developed or contributed to)
4. Any other relevant information.

Shortlisted suppliers will be invited to discuss their proposals in more detail with the Evaluation and Learning Manager and the Partnership Manager.

Comic Relief, at its sole discretion will select the successful proposal and shall be free to:
- Accept the whole, or part only, of any submission
- Accept none of the proposals
- Republish this Request for proposals

Application Process

Tenders must be submitted by 5 pm (UK time) on 20 March, 2020 to EvaluationAndLearning@comicrelief.com with the subject “Learning Coordinator for TEE Funded Partners” Any applications received after this time will not be considered.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their application is complete and meets the requirements laid out in this Terms of Reference. Failure to comply may lead to your proposal being rejected. Please ensure that you read and fully understand the requirements of this consultancy. If you have any queries in relation to your submission or to any requirements of this tender, please email: EvaluationAndLearning@comicrelief.com