

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SERVICE DELIVERY PROJECT

Terms of Reference Consultancy for SVG-HDSD-CS-INDV-71

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHING ASSISTANTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (GOSVG) has received funding from the World Bank (WB) towards the implementation of the Human Development Service Delivery (HDSD) Project. The HDSD project is designed to strengthen the quality of service delivery in education, improve the efficiency of social protection systems, and improve the effectiveness of labour market systems. The project is implemented by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning, Sustainable Development, and Information Technology (MoFEP). The other participating ministries are the Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Persons with Disabilities and Youth (MNOM); the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour; and the Ministry of Education, National Reconciliation and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MoE).

1.2 The project is structured around the four following components:

- Component 1 - Strengthening Pedagogy for Basic and Special Needs Education
- Component 2 - Building Responsive Social Protection Service Delivery Systems
- Component 3 - Strengthening Labour Market Systems and Improving Skills Training of Poor and Vulnerable Populations
- Component 4 - Project Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

1.3 The MoE is tasked with the overall management of the education system in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG). The MoE is supported by sustained investment in inclusive education and training. In fact, inclusiveness and equity are themes central to the education legal and policy framework in SVG¹. The Education Act (2006) clearly states that “all persons in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are entitled to receive an education appropriate to their needs”². The MoE further recognises that achieving true educational inclusion requires that students who have challenges or disabilities that can interfere with their learning are given the same access to educational opportunities as those who do not meet this criterion. These

¹ Situational Analysis of Children in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 2017 Pg. 50

² The Education Act, 2006, Pg. 14

children may experience difficulties ranging from physical differences, problems with concentration, learning, speech, language, and perception, to problems with behaviour and/or making and keeping friends, which mainstream educational institutions are not equipped to deal with. These difficulties may be due to one or more of the following:

- disorders which limit intellectual capacity
- psychiatric disorders
- emotional problems
- behavioural problems
- learning differences
- reduced mobility

Consequently, there are three (3) special education schools that teach children with special education needs in SVG. These schools teach students with a variety of needs that require additional or different educational provision to be made for them other than that which is generally provided for children of a similar age. More specifically these schools offer customised programming to meet each student's unique learning, social, and emotional needs, though individualised education, low teacher-to-student ratios, self-contained classrooms, academic and psychological counselling, and the use of specialised learning aids.

Thorough diagnostic testing and detection has resulted in the continued increase in student enrolment at the schools offering special education on the islands, not just at the Kindergarten level, but also through transfers from mainstream Primary and Secondary schools. Consequently, special education schools in SVG must contend with over-stretched and scarce human resources to meet these increased numbers. Furthermore, the interrupted school year, due to shutdowns caused by the COVID 19 Pandemic, has been especially hard on students with Individualised Education Programs (IEPs). Delays in converting students' IEP objectives into at-home lessons resulted in students becoming less engaged and, in some cases, losing vital skills they had worked hard to achieve.

In light of the foregoing, the MoE, under the aegis of the HDSD Project, is desirous of strengthening the instruction provided by teachers at these special education schools by contracting additional pedagogical support. This additional support will take the form of Special Needs Teaching Assistants who will work in the schools, alongside teachers and pupils, to provide valuable support for teaching and learning activities.

The HDSD Project will seek to contract a small pool of Special Education Teaching Assistants, who will be deployed to support teachers in the School for Children and Special Needs, Kingstown Campus; School for Children and Special Needs, Georgetown Campus; and The Sunshine School for Children with Special Needs in Bequia. This pedagogical assistance

will evidently ensure the effectiveness of classroom intervention given the following current student-to-teacher ratio:

Name of School	Student-to-Teacher Ratio
School for Children and Special Needs, Kingstown Campus	66 students to 12 teachers
School for Children and Special Needs, Georgetown Campus	26 students to 7 teachers
The Sunshine School for Children with Special Needs	24 students to 5 teachers

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

2.1 General Objective

2.1.1 The main objective of the Special Education Teacher Assistant is to support class teachers at public special education schools during the delivery of educational and behavioral interventions for students with special education needs.

2.2 Specific Objectives

2.2.1 To work under the instruction and/or direction of senior managers and/or teaching staff to support the delivery of quality learning and teaching of students who have a range of significant and often complex special education needs, stemming from social, emotional, behavioural, mental and physical disabilities, as well as profound and multiple, severe or moderate learning difficulties.

2.2.2 To undertake specified work with individuals and groups under the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher.

2.2.3 To encourage the participation of students in the social and academic processes of the school and enable students to become more independent learners.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

Depending upon the level of the student's disability, the students' age and the type of classroom the student is assigned; the instructional, organisational, behavioural, management, and administrative support to be provided by the Special Education Teacher Assistant will vary. However, the main duties are as follows:

- 3.1. Assist the class teacher (s) in conducting a comprehensive pre-assessment evaluation to assess the different levels of students under the consultant's remit.
- 3.2. Work with students in individual, small group, or large group settings as assigned, to implement instructional programmes and lessons plans, and reinforce learning concepts. One-on-One sessions may be required in areas including but not limited to Mathematics, Reading, Writing, Life Skills, and Information Communication Technology (ICT).
- 3.3. Assist the class teacher(s) in preparing classroom activities, assignments and/or materials for the purpose of supporting and reinforcing classroom objectives.
- 3.4. Following the guidance from the teacher, co-lead or lead a variety of classroom activities aimed at building students' social, behavioral, and mental health. These activities can include games and socialisation opportunities for students with disabilities such as autism or adapted physical education activities for students with physical impairments.
- 3.5. Assist in the transition from one learning activity to another (especially if the activity is in another room/ location). This may require setting up teaching resources, student worksheets, art supplies etc.
- 3.6. Maintain classroom equipment and work areas for the purpose of ensuring availability of safe learning environments and/or meeting mandated requirements for effective learning.
- 3.7. Assist the class teacher(s) in instructing and developing positive behavioral skills and daily living skills for students to direct their own personal care and to foster independence.
- 3.8. Assist the class teacher(s) with the administration and analysis of appropriate academic and behavioural assessment tools.
- 3.9. Monitor students' daily schedule and behaviour plan (e.g. class schedule, toileting, medication, appetite, etc.).
- 3.10. Attend to the physical needs of students as needed. This may include handling equipment such as, wheelchairs and orthotic devices such as braces, used by students with physical disabilities.
- 3.11. Assist in serving and preparing students for feeding routines (washing hands, replacing plates and cutlery etc.) and in cleaning up after meals.

3.12. Accompany students to the bathroom and assist students with personal care tasks, including but not limited to, hygiene, toileting, and wash-up routines, as requested by the class teacher(s).

3.13. Monitor, supervise and assist students during other non-instructional periods within a variety of school environments (e.g., playgrounds, hallways, bus loading zones, assemblies, field trips, etc.) for the purpose of maintaining a safe and positive learning environment.

3.14. Attend meetings, training, and professional learning sessions (e.g. first aid, CPR, emergency procedures, behaviour management, etc.) for the purpose of acquiring and/or conveying new information relative to job functions within these terms of reference.

3.15. Respond to emergency situations (e.g. injured students, other methodical emergencies, fights, etc.) for the purpose of resolving immediate safety concerns and/or directing to appropriate personnel for resolution.

3.16. Communicate effectively with staff, students, and/or parents regarding needs and concerns during class briefings.

3.17. Prepare and submit reports on student outcomes, for teachers and parents to demonstrate the student's academic and behavioural progress as requested, especially if behavioral and academic changes are part of students' intervention.

3.18. Perform other related duties as assigned for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective functioning of the work unit.

4. DELIVERABLES

4.1. Submission of a report on the results of the pre-assessment evaluation conducted on the different levels of the students under the consultant's remit.

4.2. Submission of Monthly Time Sheets and Monthly Progress Reports which should highlight the following:

- 4.2.1. General Progress of individual students or groups under his/her remit;
- 4.2.2. Observations on learning styles exhibited by students under his/her remit;
- 4.2.3. Lessons learnt throughout classroom instruction; and
- 4.2.4. Recommendations based on lessons learnt.

4.3. Submission of a Final Report which should be a summary of the activities undertaken, successes, challenges, results (planned and unplanned), main lessons identified and recommendations on how to address those lessons.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONSULTANT

Type of Consultancy:	Individual
Procurement Method:	Individual Consultant Selection
Length and Duration:	<p>The consultant will be contracted for a period five (5) months commencing February 2022 until July 2022 in the first instance.</p> <p>The consultant will be subject to an initial one-month period of probation. The services of the consultant may be terminated at the end of the probation period, if his/her performance is found to be unsatisfactory.</p> <p>At the closing of the contract, the consultant’s performance will be assessed to determine whether it should be renewed for the next academic year.</p>
Place of work:	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Qualifications and experience:	<p>The Consultant shall at a minimum, possess the following qualifications and experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of five (5) CSEC passes inclusive of mathematics and English. • At least two (2) years’ experience working with, caring for and/or volunteering with students/persons with learning, behavioural, intellectual, and/or physical challenges, and evidence of training in interacting with and/or teaching persons with special educational needs. Evidence of training in the course “Catering to Students with Special Educational Needs” offered by the Saint Vincent Community College would be an asset. <i>an additional two (2) years of experience specified above may substitute for formal training not received.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current First Aid / CPR training would be an asset. • The candidate must pass a criminal history background check to be considered for the consultancy.
Assets and Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to interact and communicate effectively with children with cognitive impairments. • Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to build effective working relationships with staff, students, parents, public and professional networks. • Ability to work collaboratively as a team member and independently. • Excellent organisational and time management skills. • Ability to operate a computer and related software such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint. • Keep accurate records and submit reports in a timely manner. • Meet physical requirements necessary to perform assigned duties in a safe and effective manner for self and others.
Physical Requirements	<p>The physical demands described below are representative of those that must be met by the consultant to successfully perform the essential functions of this consultancy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently required to communicate with students and staff • The HSD Project is committed to creating the least restrictive environment for all qualified applicants, however repetitive motions of the following actions may be required: grasping, pushing, sitting, standing, walking, running, reaching, stooping, kneeling,

	<p>crouching, balance, climbing, crawling, pulling and lifting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be able to observe students and ensure their safety. • May be required to assist in the movement of students with reduced mobility at any given time.
ork Environment	<p>Consultants must be able to function in the following environmental or atmospheric conditions commonly associated with the performance of the functions of this consultancy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be exposed to inclement outdoor weather conditions. • May be exposed to potentially hazardous bodily fluids when assisting students with physical needs. • May be required to work in a physically hazardous setting when a student is in crisis.

6. INPUTS BY THE CLIENT

6.1 The MoE and the educational institution to which the consultant is assigned will provide the consultant with all relevant documentation and resources to facilitate the completion of the consultancy.

6.2 The Educational Institution to which the consultant is assigned will provide desk space to the consultant to carry out the tasks if necessary.

6.3 The MoE through the educational institution to which the consultant is assigned, will conduct a two-day workshop, and commits to executing a five-day highly supervised orientation and assessment of the consultants, at the start of the consultancy.

7. REPORTING/ SUPERVISION

7.1. The Project Coordinator of the HSD Project (under the aegis of the MoFEP) will have general oversight of the consultant's work.

7.2 The Consultant will coordinate and work closely with the designated officers of the MoE and class teacher(s) and Principal of the Educational Institution to the consultants are assigned to carry out the functions under these TORs.

7.3 The day-to-day activities and tasks of the consultant will be managed by the Principal and/or his/her designate at each school.

7.4 All deliverables shall be submitted to the Principal and/or designated officers of the assigned school, and the Project Coordinator for review and approval.

8. COMPENSATION

8.1 The Consultant will be paid an hourly rate commensurate with the services provided.

9. TERMINATION

9.1 The Client may terminate the consultancy with prior written notice to the Consultant if the Consultant does not remedy a failure in the performance of his/her obligations under the Contract; if the Consultant, has engaged in corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, coercive, or obstructive practices in performing the Contract.

9.2 The Consultant may terminate the consultancy with prior written notice, if the Client shall fail to perform any of its agreed obligations to the consultant.

9.3 The Client shall terminate the consultancy with immediate effect, when the safety or welfare of the school(s) or the student(s) are threatened or when the Consultant has been suspected and/or charged by summons, warrant, indictment or information with the commission of a felony, a misdemeanor involving, sexual assault; obscenity and related offenses; drugs; moral turpitude; neglect; or the physical or sexual abuse of a child and/student; or any other equivalent offenses.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1 The consultant shall maintain full confidentiality of all documentation and discretion in the dissemination of results. The consultant may not utilise, without prior approval from the MoE, MoFEP, or any other related Ministry or Agency, the information for presentations or studies related to this consultancy.