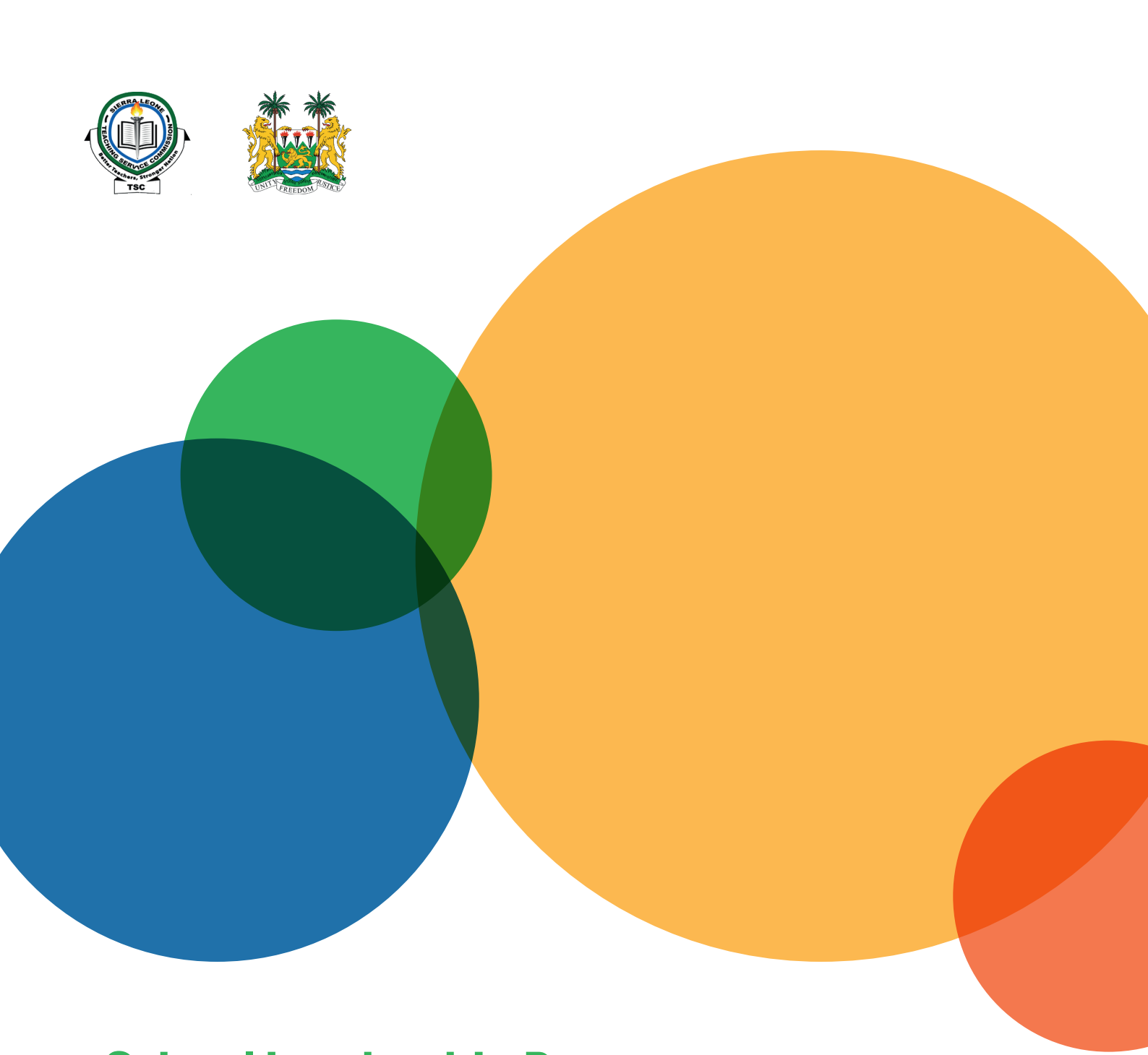




School Leadership Programme Foundations

Guide for Local Leaders of Learning

2026

Introduction

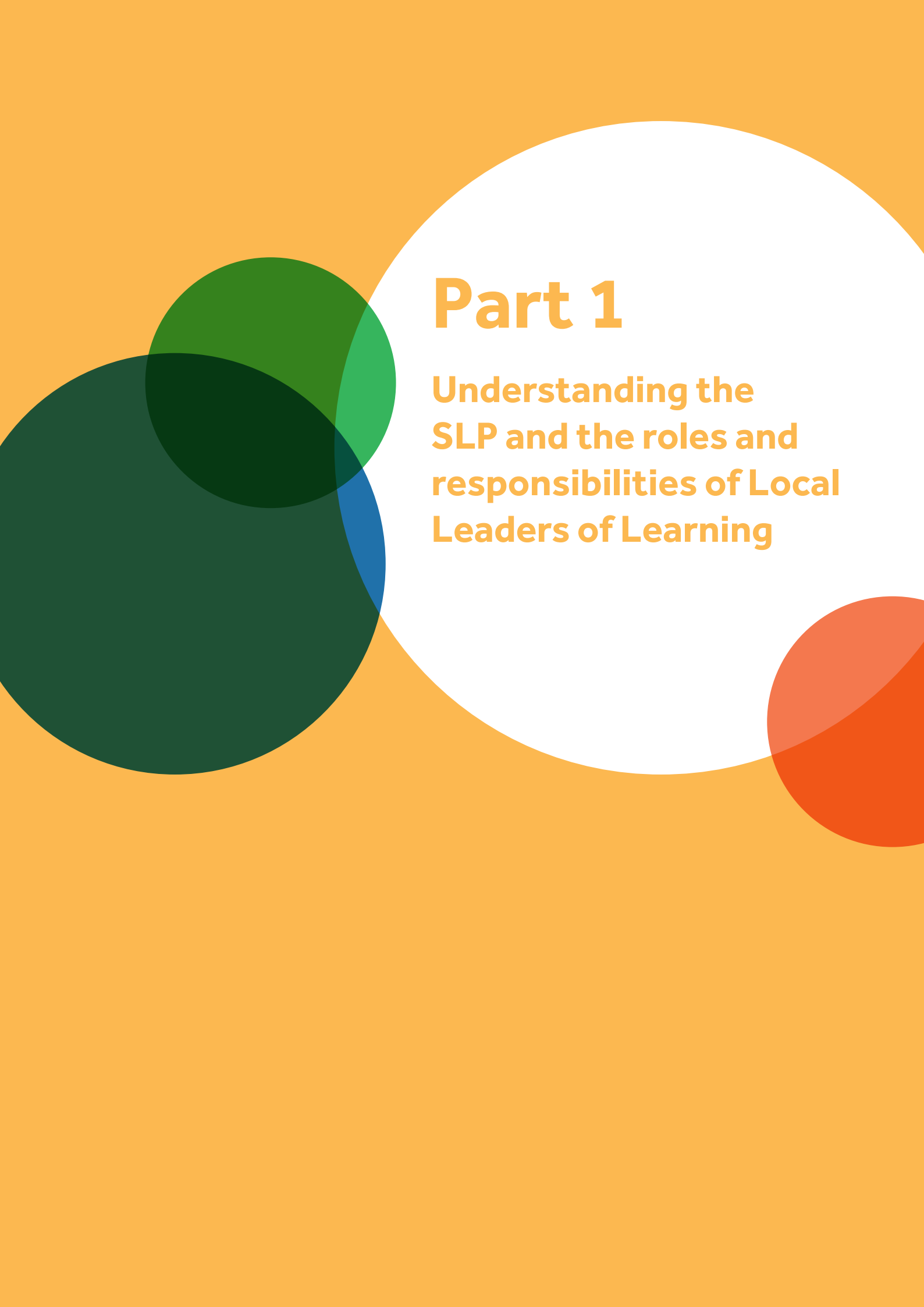
This Guide is designed for Local Leaders of Learning (LLL), to help them work effectively with the school leaders participating in the Teaching Service Commission's School Leadership Programme (SLP).

Part 1 of this Guide explains some of the vocabulary and key concepts underpinning the SLP. It includes tips, advice and practical suggestions on how to:

- ✓ Provide in-person and remote support to school leaders in the SLP
- ✓ Give specific, actionable feedback to school leaders in the SLP
- ✓ Help school leaders translate new knowledge and skills gained from the SLP to positive change at their school.

Part 1 of this Guide also includes the SLP schedule.

Part 2 of this Guide provides LLLs with information and activities for facilitating the two-day, face-to-face (F2F) Foundation Module.



Part 1

**Understanding the
SLP and the roles and
responsibilities of Local
Leaders of Learning**

Part 1: Understanding the SLP and the roles and responsibilities of Local Leaders of Learning

This section in the Guide includes key concepts and vocabulary related to the School Leadership Programme (SLP). School leaders in the SLP have the same list of vocabulary in their Participant Guide.

What is the School Leadership Programme (SLP)?

Established by the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) in Sierra Leone, the SLP is a year-long blended professional development programme for school leaders in Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) and Senior Secondary Schools (SSS), including Principals, Vice-Principals, Heads of Departments and Senior Teachers with leadership responsibilities. The SLP helps school leaders strengthen knowledge and skills in leading school improvement for all learners, especially learners from poor households, learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, parenting and pregnant learners and other learners facing barriers to learning.

What is blended learning?

To blend means to mix or combine something. The SLP combines a variety of ways of learning, including face-to-face (F2F) instruction, self-study, at-school coaching and support, and discussions, coaching and support through WhatsApp.

This combination builds on the strengths of each approach and addresses some of their shortcomings. For example, it would be disruptive and time consuming to offer school leaders a weekly F2F training workshop for eight months. Self-study is more convenient, but it provides less peer support, and it requires self-motivation. The SLP therefore blends these and other approaches.

F2F sessions and WhatsApp calls and discussion help form relationships and support peer learning. Regular personal contact and advice is provided by the Local Leader of Learning (LLL) via online support and in-school coaching.

Online support takes two forms: 1) on demand – when the school leader wants to discuss something specific with the LLL and 2) online discussions - guided weekly discussions with peers facilitated by the LLL.

What are SLP F2F activities?

There are four F2F sessions during the SLP. These are:

- A two-day session during which school leaders complete the Foundation Module.
- A half-day, in-person session at the start of each module (there are three modules).

During the F2F sessions, school leaders meet their LLL, engage in interactive discussions, reflect on their school leadership experiences and have an opportunity to build professional connections and expand their professional networks.

Who can participate in the SLP?

Participants in the SLP are JSS and SSS school leaders including Principals, Vice-Principals, Heads of Departments, and other school leaders who have applied and been selected to participate in the programme.

Who are the Local Leaders of Learning?

The Local Leaders of Learning, referred to as LLLs, are usually lecturers from higher education institutions in Sierra Leone, who guide school leaders through the SLP, answer their questions and address their concerns. Most importantly, LLLs facilitate and encourage learning and practical application of that learning in their schools. They also assess your learning throughout the SLP.

What is an SLP module?

The SLP is divided into four modules. The first is the Foundation Module, which prepares school leaders for the programme. This is followed by three modules, one per term, each focusing on a specific aspect of school leadership:

1. Leading Safe and Inclusive Schools
2. Leading Teaching and Learning
3. Leading School Improvement.

What is an SLP Toolkit?

The SLP is presented in a set of self-study workbooks called Toolkits. There are three Toolkits, as well as a Participant Guide for the Foundation Module. Together, these contain all the materials school leaders need to complete the SLP.

All school leaders in the SLP receive the SLP Participant Guide and the three Toolkits in printed format, and are required to complete all their coursework in them. Written work in the Toolkit is used by LLLs as the evidence of learning and action on school improvement during the SLP. The Toolkit also serves as a record of school leader attendance and participation in WhatsApp discussions.

LLs are also required to write their feedback on an assignment or task in the Toolkit. Space is provided for this in the Toolkits.

School leaders submit their completed Toolkit for assessment by their LLL at the end of each module, and again at the end of the programme. However, LLLs are required to make a provisional assessment when an assignment or task is completed.

The protocol that LLLs should follow when assessing coursework completed in each module is provided at the end of all three Toolkits.

What is the MBSSE Platform?

The Sierra Leone Education Knowledge Platform is an online repository where the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) and its partners share a wide range of resources and information. These include reports, research briefs, manuals, lesson plans, videos about school safety, policy documents and much more. This platform and its resources are freely accessible to anyone with a desktop or laptop computer, tablet or smartphone. You can access the platform here: <https://mbsseknowledgeplatform.gov.sl/>

SLP materials are hosted here: <https://mbsseknowledgeplatform.gov.sl/material/school-leadership-programme/>

What is an SLP WhatsApp Group?

- **SLP WhatsApp Group:** This is a group that each LLL sets up for the school leaders assigned to them. The LLL will add all school leaders to the group before or during the Foundation Module. Through this group, the LLL facilitates SLP-related discussions, shares information and provides coaching and support. The group is also used to share links to reference materials, videos and other course resources. It remains active throughout the SLP and should be re-set for each new cohort.
- **LLL SLP WhatsApp Group:** This is a group for LLLs only, through which information and updates can be exchanged. This group is active throughout the SLP and will be re-set for each new cohort. It may also include representatives from the TSC and Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs).
- **SLP Alumni WhatsApp Group:** It is likely that school leaders who complete the SLP will want to stay in touch through WhatsApp and join previous alumni in sharing experiences and continue inspiring each other. In the final meeting with school leaders, LLLs should check if individual school leaders would like to set up or join an alumni group.

What is the SLP Support Team?

The SLP Support team currently includes representatives from the TSC. The SLP Support Team is responsible for selecting school leaders for the SLP, SLP implementation, collecting feedback and learning lessons from the SLP, continuous improvement of the SLP and providing support to LLLs. Over time, TTIs in Sierra Leone are expected to take on some of these responsibilities. As the LLL you will be in regular contact with the SLP Support Team.

School leaders in the SLP are not in direct contact with the SLP Support Team. They are in touch with their LLL. If matters need to be escalated, either the LLL will escalate them to the SLP Support Team, or the school leader may need to speak directly to the TSC (via the TSC Deputy Director in their district).

What are the pre- and post-assessments in the Toolkits?

At the start of every Module there is a Unit titled: An introduction to the module and pre-assessment.

Pre-assessment is a questionnaire that school leaders complete before starting the module. School leaders should be asked to fill the questionnaire honestly and before studying any course materials. They should not feel that they need to demonstrate competence or good performance. Responses should be factual and honest. LLLs must emphasise the importance of the pre-assessment.

At the end of the module, there is a Unit titled: Summary of the module and post-assessment. Post-assessment uses the same questionnaire as used in the pre-assessment. The only difference is that it is filled after school leaders have completed the Module.

The pre- and post-assessment gives school leaders, LLLs and the SLP Support Team an opportunity to track changes in knowledge, skills and behaviours over time.

Note that the pre- and post-assessment are not part of the formal course assessment and should not be treated as such.

What is the SLP Assessment?

The SLP is an assessed programme. This means that school leaders cannot successfully complete the SLP and earn the certificate without having completed all the required tasks and achieved or exceeded the pass mark.

SLP assessment is practical and is an integral part of the course. Completion of all tasks is crucial for building new competencies and knowledge, but not all tasks are graded and assessed. Assessed tasks are listed on the final page of each Toolkit. This helps ensure that school leaders in the SLP and LLLs are aware of the tasks that form part of the assessed portfolio.

If the LLL notices that the quality of assessed and non-assessed tasks differs, the LLL should raise this with the school leader and remind them that the purpose of the SLP is to gain new knowledge and competencies, not to complete the assessed tasks in order to get a certificate.

The LLL should help school leaders to understand and develop a regular practice of collecting evidence and keeping records of all tasks undertaken as part of the SLP. School leaders are expected to keep these records in their Toolkit. The LLL should regularly review these records, provide supportive and developmental feedback and grade the assessed tasks.

School leaders are required to show their SLP Toolkit to the LLL on every coaching visit and must submit their Toolkit for assessment at the end of each module, and again at the end of the programme.

SLP Assessment is based on:

- 1) Attendance and participation:** Attendance and active participation in F2F sessions, coaching sessions, and online/phone discussions is a critical part of the assessment.
- 2) Written answers:** The answers school leaders write in the Toolkits are assessed. The competencies assessed through written answers include knowledge and understanding of key concepts, the ability to use evidence to support an argument, the ability to reflect on their own practice, and the ability to drive change in their school. The rigour with which school leaders compose their answers is also assessed. School leaders are expected to compose their answers in complete, clear, correct language and to include sources of information.
- 3) Uptake of feedback:** During the SLP, LLLs visit school leaders in their schools. School visits have several objectives. LLLs observe school leaders in the context of the school where they work and with their teaching team. This helps the LLL to understand any challenges more fully. LLLs also observe the efforts made by school leaders to make their schools safer, more inclusive and better tailored to the needs of all learners. On school visits, LLLs may seek evidence and testimonies from teachers, parents, learners and others about actions taken by school leaders. LLLs and school leaders also engage in honest professional discussions about their school improvement efforts, successes and challenges. Jointly, they agree on strategies to make the school leaders' efforts even more successful. School leader engagement during these school visits and professional discussions forms part of the assessment.
- 4) Evidence of school improvement efforts:** During the SLP, school leaders undertake practical tasks, which aim to build their knowledge about the challenges and barriers to learning in their school. School leaders are asked to prioritise some of these challenges, plan for their resolution and take actions to involve school stakeholders (teachers, Board of Governors, parents, learners, wider community) to resolve them. The plan and practical school-improvement efforts are part of the assessment. Evidence of school leader efforts could be in a form of testimonies and feedback, or data collected in school (for example, attendance data) or it could be photographs or artefacts such as a written plan or a letter from a learner.

Note that not all school improvement efforts result in a success therefore success in this area is not assessed as part of this course. Instead, LLLs should look for and assess evidence of efforts made to create positive changes, and evidence that school leaders are reflecting on and learning from their efforts.

What is the SLP Memorandum of Understanding?

At the start of the SLP, everyone involved makes an agreement. The team managing and delivering the SLP agrees to make content accessible, practical and informative. They also agree to support you to make positive changes in your school, despite the challenges. They agree to actively listen and offer you professional advice.

In turn, LLLs ask school leaders to commit to the SLP and to driving improvements in their schools. They encourage school leaders to follow the advice in the table below.

Do	Do not...
- Keep up with the SLP schedule. - Engage with SLP content weekly. - Be realistic. Remember that improving your school takes time and often involves small steps. - Check upcoming content at the start of the week and complete the tasks throughout the week. - Undertake all tasks in the SLP. - Read reference materials. - Keep a record of your school improvement actions weekly. - Use evidence to show your learning and your school improvement efforts. - Contact your LLL for help if you are facing challenges. - Celebrate every success – no matter how small!	- Leave tasks until the end of the week, or for completion before the next LLL visit, or at the end of the module. It is not possible to catch up effectively. - Appoint another teacher to write answers in your Toolkit. LLLs know when someone else has responded and they are not allowed to assess someone else's work. - Copy answers, observations, data and evidence from other school leaders or other sources. LLLs are interested in your responses about your school and community.

If school leaders agree to continue their school improvement mission, ask them to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) provided in the SLP Participant Guide.

What support is available to school leaders in the SLP?

Coaching – As an LLL, you provide professional support and advice (coaching) to school leaders in the SLP. You do this remotely, on the phone, and in person, on school visits. You should make at least two visits to each school leader at their school each term. On the visit, you will discuss work they have completed and give feedback.

To help you keep track of coaching visits, make a note of dates in a table like the one below.

Participant name	Date of coaching visit 1 – Term 1	Date of coaching visit 2 – Term 1	Date of coaching visit 1 – Term 2	Date of coaching visit 2 – Term 2	Date of coaching visit 1 – Term 3	Date of coaching visit 2 – Term 3

Peer Support – LLLs facilitate initial interactions between school leaders in the SLP. LLLs encourage them to stay connected, ask each other questions, share experiences and ask for support. School leaders can become peer mentors to one another. After initial connections have been made, LLLs do not need to participate in interactions between peers unless invited to do so.

Internet – School leaders in the SLP need Internet access to participate in online peer discussions and calls. They also need it to access several resources referenced in the SLP toolkits. Internet access is not available everywhere in Sierra Leone and there may be occasional challenges with the connectivity. Encourage school leaders to be resourceful and find solutions that work for them in their situation.

SLP Materials – The SLP includes the following materials:

- 1) SLP Participant Guide:** This is distributed and used during the Foundation Module. It helps school leaders find answers to questions they may have about the SLP and aims to build their confidence by reassuring them that support is available throughout the programme.
- 2) Toolkit 1: Leading Safe and Inclusive Schools** – This Toolkit contains all the content school leaders need to complete SLP Module 1, as well as space for notes, answers, questions and feedback. It must be submitted for assessment at the end of the module and again at the end of the SLP.
- 3) Toolkit 2: Leading Teaching and Learning** – This Toolkit contains all the content school leaders need to complete SLP Module 2, as well as space for notes, answers, questions and feedback. It must be submitted for assessment at the end of the module and at the end of the SLP.

- 4) Toolkit 3: Leading School Improvement** – This Toolkit contains all the content school leaders need to complete SLP Module 3, as well as space for notes, answers, questions and feedback. It must be submitted for assessment at the end of the module and at the end of the SLP.
- 5) Reference materials** – These are articles and other useful resources recommended to school leaders participating in the SLP. The materials are available online, although LLLs may need to support some school leaders to access them. How do LLLs guide school leaders through tasks and help them in the use of evidence?

Watching professional videos – As part of the course, school leaders are encouraged to watch several videos. These videos are intended to inspire, share information in an easy and digestible way, and to provide resources that can be shared with teachers in their school.

To watch a video, school leaders can click the link to the video in the digital version of the Toolkit, access the link shared in the WhatsApp Group, or search for the video online by using a web browser.

Peer discussions/WhatsApp Group Discussions – Most of the peer discussions will be organised by the LLL via WhatsApp or phone, depending on what you agree as a group. Attendance and active participation in these discussions is assessed. School leaders are required to attend all discussions.

If they are sick or unable to attend for another reason, they must inform the LLL and agree on an alternative date/form of participation.

If they logged into a discussion, but internet failed, the LLL will take a note of that. They will need to reach out to the LLL and reschedule or agree on an alternative way of participation.

Both the LLL and school leaders should come to the discussions prepared. As an LLL, review the discussion topic at the start of the week and read reference materials related to the topic. At a minimum, take time to think through the discussion prompts before the discussion. You may also find helpful to speak with other LLLs for suggestions and inspiration before organising the discussion.

As an LLL, you must manage online discussion time effectively. Discussions should not be too long, so that school leaders have time to participate and stay focused. A duration no longer than 30 minutes is recommended. Encourage school leaders to keep their contributions short and relevant.

School leaders should record key points from these discussions in their toolkits. As an LLL, you should review these notes during your school visits and consider them as part of the assessment.

Self-study questions - These questions are designed to encourage school leaders to stop and reflect on their work, beliefs, practice, and learning from reference materials, SLP videos and professional discussions. School leaders should use the space in their toolkits to write their answers and support them with evidence. LLLs should regularly review these self-study tasks and provide supportive and developmental feedback so that with every task, participants' ability to use evidence gets stronger.

They should aim at full, well composed answers. Look at the example below:



Toolkit 1: Unit 1, Task 3

Write down three things you think a good leader would do to make their school inclusive.

According to UNESCO (2024/25) "leadership is at the heart of quality education". UNESCO states that "educational leadership is the second most important factor explaining learning outcomes." Good leaders should:

1. Communicate a clear vision for equity and inclusion.
2. Build collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders.
3. Challenge biased policies and practices to ensure fairness and access for all learners.

I agree with that. Based on my practice, and materials I read (for example: MBSSE (2021) National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools, Kamara (2022) What makes leadership successful? UNICEF Policy Brief Inclusive Education for Every Child in Sierra Leone Inclusive), a good leader can foster a culture of belonging, empower staff through professional development, and advocate for systemic change to make their school inclusive.

Action 1:

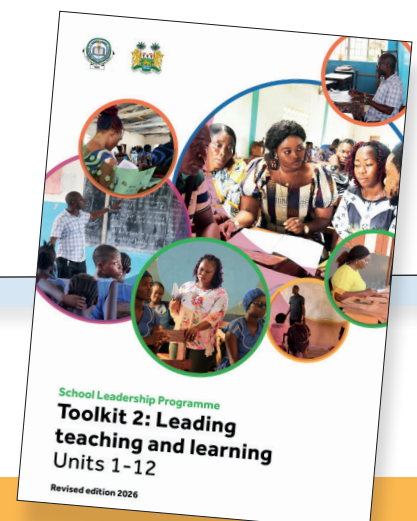
Creating shared leadership structures can make the school inclusive by giving voice to teachers, students, and families in decision-making processes.

Action 2:

Providing targeted professional development can make the school inclusive by equipping staff with knowledge and the tools to support diverse learners effectively.

Action 3:

Reviewing and revising school policies can make the school inclusive by removing structural barriers that marginalise certain learners.



Remember! It is important for school leaders to demonstrate their professional experience, the knowledge they gained through engaging with reference materials and their reflection on the subject. It is also important they demonstrate their ability to use evidence to develop and support arguments in their answers. School leaders need to explicitly explain what evidence they are using to form their arguments and how it supports or challenges their beliefs and practice.

If the question asks them to see the school through the eyes of a learner or a teacher, they should speak with them and use their answers as the evidence and basis for their argument and reflection.

As an LLL, you may find that some school leaders spend little time engaging with learners and teachers to understand their perspectives or to gather their ideas. This is one of the reasons why it is important to challenge school leaders when they make assumptions or fail to use evidence to support their responses. LLLs should also encourage them to find evidence in professional literature or from their peer network.

Reflection questions – Some tasks in the toolkits require school leaders to reflect. In these tasks, school leaders are presented with a scenario, and are asked to consider what they would do in that situation. They are expected to develop their answers after they have engaged with the reference reading materials for the unit and discussed the topic with their peers.

In these activities, school leaders may find their habits and beliefs are challenged. The role of the LLL is to support school leaders to use evidence and reflection to recognise when their habits and beliefs may need to change.

Practical tasks – Some tasks within the course require school leaders to, for example, hold a meeting, organise a training session, prepare a poster and hang it in the school, or organise an assembly. These are the tasks through which they have an opportunity to inspire and change the mindset of others. These are the tasks that put them in a practical position of a leader.

School leaders need to prepare for these tasks. LLLs should check that the necessary preparation has been completed and help build participants' confidence to undertake them. LLLs should also check that school leaders are engaging others in carrying out the tasks and keeping a record of what they did and what happened.

Data and evidence – Using data and evidence to develop an argument and shape practice is one way to make positive change. So, what data and evidence can school leaders in the SLP use? Here are some examples:

- **Evidence of attendance:** school/student registers, teacher attendance registers, visitor books, attendance sheet. These are some common examples of attendance evidence. If a participant claims that a learner is frequently absent, they need to use the school register as evidence to back-up that claim. They need to analyse how many days of absence are registered, and whether there is any pattern related to that absence. The evidence may help school leaders identify solutions. If it does not, it means that they need additional information and evidence.

- **Evidence of performance:** This could include Continuous Assessment results, report cards, photographs of learners' work. These examples can be used as evidence to demonstrate learners' performance. Lesson Plans, schemes of work, teaching and learning resources could all serve as evidence of teacher performance.
- **Evidence of conduct:** Notes about behaviour or a log of actions can be used as evidence. School Safety Committee (SSC) meeting minutes could also be a useful source of data or the notes that learners post in the school complaint boxes.
- **Interviews:** Individual and group interviews, including focus group discussions, can be powerful tools for gathering information and better understanding a problem. Notes and quotations from interviews can be used as a form of evidence.
- **Observations:** Lesson observations, a mindful walk around the school, sitting in the playground and observing interactions between learners or teachers, visiting classrooms and checking school compound can give you a lot of new information and can inspire reflection. Notes from such observations, a photograph, notes from lesson observation can be used as a form of evidence.

Evidence-based school improvement actions – Various forms of evidence can help school leaders draw conclusions. These conclusions will help them develop recommendations, which in turn inform plans for improvement. School leaders should keep records of each step in this process: from gathering evidence and forming conclusions to developing recommendations and turning those into plans and actions. All school improvement actions should be based on evidence and findings.

When school leaders implement their school improvement actions, remind them to collect evidence of their actions. Make sure they keep all the evidence in their Toolkit. This can include:

- **Testimonies and quotes** – From learners, parents, SSC members, teachers, community members, LLL, etc.
- **Photographs** – Photographic evidence of school improvement efforts can be a powerful way of documenting action. For example, if a school leader collect all canes from around the school compound, set them on fire, and take pictures of the process, these photographs can provide evidence of the practical action taken towards ending corporal punishment in the school.
- **Videos** – School leaders can record videos of their school improvement actions, such as a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Circle learning session. Videos can also be a powerful tool to capture testimonies. Videos can be submitted to the LLL via WhatsApp.
- **Journal** – Organised notes registering school improvement actions and reflections on the results can also be used as evidence.
- **Report** – A short report particularising their school improvement actions can be used as evidence.

As an LLL, you will assess and grade the evidence of school leaders' attendance, participation, learning and efforts through the SLP. You will use the assessment protocol provided at the end of each Toolkit to guide and record your assessment of the work completed for each module.

Course schedule

The SLP is implemented over one academic year, with one module intended to be completed each term. Adjustments may be required to accommodate school holidays.

		Time	Module activity	Focus
Term 1		Term 1 – week 1	Course preparation	SLP logistics and preparation
		Term 1 – week 2	Half-day, F2F workshop for school leaders and their LLL	Introduction to SLP course and Module 1
	Module 1: Leading safe and inclusive schools		Unit 1	Introduction to inclusion and pre-assessment
			Unit 2	Understanding exclusion and inclusion
			Unit 3	Understanding SRGBV and Teacher's Code of Conduct
			Unit 4	Making schools safe
			Unit 5	Including learners with disabilities in our schools
			Unit 6	Empowering priority groups
			Unit 7	Working effectively with the whole school community to achieve Radical Inclusion
			Unit 8	Planning for school improvement
			Unit 9	Leading safe and inclusive schools
			Unit 10	Summary and post- assessment
			End of module assessment	LLLs assess coursework completed by school leaders
			Break	

Table continues overleaf

		Time	Module activity	Focus
Term 2	Module 2: Leading teaching and learning	Term 2 – week 1	Half-day, F2F workshop for school leaders and their LLL	Reflections on Module 1 and Introduction to Module 2
			Unit 1	Introduction and pre-assessment
			Unit 2	Effective relationships for teaching and learning
			Unit 3	Maximising learning
			Unit 4	Good pedagogy and effective teachers
			Unit 5	Effective Continuous Professional Development
			Unit 6	Delivering Continuous Professional Development in school
			Unit 7	Tailoring Continuous Professional Development to teacher needs
			Unit 8	Classroom observation and feedback
			Unit 9	Conducting effective observations
			Unit 10	Coaching
			Unit 11	Monitoring and assessing learning using data
			Unit 12	Leading assessment across your school and post-assessment
			End of module assessment	LLLs assess coursework completed by school leaders
			Break	
Term 3	Module 3: Leading School Improvement	Term 3 – Week 1	Half-day, F2F workshop for school leaders and their LLL	Reflections on Module 2 and Introduction to Module 3
			Unit 1	Introduction to school improvement planning and self-assessment
			Unit 2	School Improvement Plans
			Unit 3	Community engagement in school improvement
			Unit 4	Understanding school effectiveness
			Unit 5	Assessing the effectiveness of your school
			Unit 6	Understanding barriers to school effectiveness
			Unit 7	Turning problems into opportunities for improvement
			Unit 8	Setting goals in your School Improvement Plan
			Unit 9	Deciding priority actions for your School Improvement Plan
			Unit 10	Developing your school improvement plan
			Unit 11	Implementing and monitoring your School Improvement Plan
			Unit 12	Summary and post-assessment
			End of module assessment	LLLs assess coursework completed by school leaders
			Graduation	
			Break	



Part 2

SLP Foundation Module Facilitator Guide and Resources

Part 2: SLP Foundation Module - Facilitator Guide and Resources

Resources needed for the Foundation Module

Attendance registration form	✓
Flipchart paper/blackboard	
Markers/chalk	
Copy paper	
Post-it notes or pieces of paper and cello tape	
Masking tape	
SLP Participant Guide	
SLP Toolkits	
Internet	
Link to MBSSE Platform	

SLP Foundation Module Agenda

Day 1

Time	Title of the session	Materials
08:00 – 08:15	Registration	Attendance sheet
08:15 – 09:00	Opening and introductions	Copy paper, markers
09:00 – 09:15	Rules of the workshop	Flipchart, markers, flipchart stand
09:15 – 09:20	Car park	Flipchart, markers, flipchart stand
09:20 – 09:40	Expectations	Flipchart, post it notes, markers, flipchart stand
09:40 – 09:45	Foundation Module objectives	Pre-prepared flipchart with objectives
09:45 – 10:30	About the SLP	
09:45 – 09:55	What is the SLP?	
09:55 – 10:10	SLP schedule, key vocabulary and concepts	SLP Participants' Guide
10:10 – 10:30	Methods and forms of support used within the course	WhatsApp
10:30 – 11:00	Tea break	
11:00 – 11:05	Energiser	
11:05 – 13:00	Methods of assessment used in the SLP – assessment schedule at the end of Toolkits	
11:05 – 11:30	Attendance and participation	
11:30 – 12:00	Written answers	
12:00 – 13:00	Uptake of feedback	
	Evidence of school improvement efforts	
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 14:05	Energiser	
14:05 – 14:15	Where to find course materials?	Internet Link to MBSSE Platform https://mbsseknowledgeplatform.gov.sl
14:15 – 15:00	Q&A	FAQ
15:00 – 16:00	Course commitment MoU Staying connected Peer support	SLP MoU - Included in the SLP Participant Guide
16:00 – 16:30	Closing session	
16:30 – 16:45	Departure	

Day 2

Time	Title of the session	Materials
08:00 – 08:15	Registration	Attendance sheet
08:15 – 08:45	Opening session	
08:45 – 09:00	How did we do with our homework?	Internet
09:00 – 09:20	Closer look at Toolkit 1 and pre-assessment	Toolkit 1
09:20 – 10:20	How to compose our answers – Self-study questions	Toolkit 1
10:20 – 10:50	Tea break	
10:50 – 11:00	Energiser	
11:00 – 11:30	How to use the MBSSE Platform	Internet
11:30 – 12:30	How to compose our answers – Reflection questions	Toolkit 1
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 13:40	Energiser	
13:40 – 14:00	Introduction to data collection	Toolkit 1
14:00 – 14:45	Data and evidence collection from various sources	Toolkit 1
14:45 – 15:30	Q&A	FAQ
15:30 – 16:30	Closing session	
16:30 – 16:45	Departure	

Foundation Module – Day 1

Before the workshop

Seating arrangements are important for facilitating pair-discussions and group-work. The right seating arrangement can also help with team building. **So, before the workshop, prepare the venue.**

Arrange seats in a circle so that everyone can see each other. Check that no-one is sitting with their back to someone.

Check that you have all the materials you need for the two-day workshop. If you do not have an item, think of a substitute. For example, if you do not have post it notes, cut up scrap paper that has only been used on one side and provide sticky tape.

Check where the toilets are and if they are clean. Check they are accessible to all school leaders. If they are not clean, or not accessible to everyone, ask the proprietor, caretaker or the principal to follow up.

If you are delivering the Foundation Module workshop with another LLL, decide in advance who will do what.

Registration – 15 minutes

Use the Attendance Register to record attendance and collect contact details. Remember to record attendance on both days. Emphasise to school leaders that they should write their details clearly. You will need this information to set up the WhatsApp Group, for example. Check that all required fields have been completed.

Opening Session – 10 minutes

Ensure that the school leaders are sitting in a circle and that everyone can see each other.

Welcome them to this SLP Foundation Module workshop.

Introduce yourself. Tell people a bit about your professional background. For example, the institution you work with and your experience, including experience in academic leadership.

Explain that you are a member of a team of LLL supporting the implementation of the SLP in Sierra Leone. Explain that every school leader participating in the SLP is assigned an LLL, whose role is to provide guidance, coaching and support throughout the programme. Explain that LLLs also assess participants' work, and they liaise between school leaders and the SLP Management Team.

Explain that the SLP Management Team is the team responsible for the design and implementation of the SLP on behalf of the Government and is led by the TSC. The Management Team ensures that the course runs smoothly and that improvements are applied as and when necessary.

Explain workshop timings and cover any other housekeeping questions.

Introductions – 20 minutes

Distribute small pieces of paper and ask school leaders to create their name tags. They should write their preferred name on the paper and place it in front of them if they are sitting at desks or use a piece of sticky tape to attach their name tag to themselves.

Ask school leaders to briefly introduce themselves by stating their name, their role within the school, name of the school and location, and to describe in one word how they feel today.

For example: My name is Georgina Fortune. I am the Vice Principal in St. Columba's Junior Secondary School in Kailahun. I am feeling anxious and curious about what we will be doing today.

Remind school leaders to keep their responses brief so the group can progress through the introductions quickly.

Rules of the Workshop – 15 minutes

Hang an empty flipchart titled "Rules of the workshop". Ask school leaders to state the rules that they would like to govern this workshop.

For example:

We commit to:

- Keep time
- Keep phones on silence
- Participate actively
- Be respectful, respect opinions of others
- Reduce movement

After the rules are set, move the flipchart from the stand move it to a place where it can be easily seen by everyone.

Tip: Make sure that it is the school leaders who propose the rules. It is harder to break the rules when they propose them. Also, they are learning about group management which they may in the future use in their workshops with teachers.

Car Park – 5 minutes

Display an empty flipchart titled "Car Park". Explain that often, during workshops, participants may have important questions, ideas or concerns that are not directly relevant to the current discussion or activity. Rather than using valuable session time to address them immediately, invite school leaders to record them on the flipchart or write them on a post-it or sticky note and place it on the flipchart. Move the poster to a wall where it can be easily accessed by all.

Invite school leaders to bring these questions to you during breaks or lunch for further discussion.

What I would like to change in my school because of the SLP – 20 minutes

Hang a flipchart titled **“Expected changes in school and my learning goals”**.

Ask school leaders to think about what changes they would like the SLP to help them make in their school. Ask them to write **one change on one post it** and hang it on the flipchart. Allow five minutes for this task.

If a school leader has more than one idea, they need to write each idea on a separate post it. This will help you group the changes by topics and manage the feedback at the end of the SLP. Advise no more than three ideas per school leader so that you can manage time.

After school leaders have posted their ideas, read them aloud and group them. If the change is unclear, ask for clarification. If the change seems unrealistic, discuss it and try to change it into something that is more achievable. For example, a school leader might say she wants her school to have more pin-coded teachers in her school. However, this is beyond the power of a school leader to control. By asking why the school leader wants more pin-coded teachers, you might find out that the volunteer teachers in the school do not stay long. Then a more achievable change might be to have volunteer teachers stay longer in the school – and solutions might be within the power of the school leader.

After reading out all changes school leaders would like to see in their schools and all the learning gains that they want to achieve, ask them to make a note of these so that they can refer back to them during the programme.

Take a photo of the flipchart with the expected changes and learning goals, so that you have a record of them for future reference and a nice reminder for the graduation ceremony.

Objectives of the workshop – 5 minutes

Hang a flipchart showing the “Objectives of the Foundation Module workshop” and read them out.

Tip: Write the objectives on the flipchart before the workshop! There will be no time to write these objectives during the session, so have the flipchart ready prior to the workshop.

Intended outcomes of the Foundation Module

By the end of the Foundation Module, you will be able to:

Day 1

- Explain how the SLP is organised, the methods used and how it is assessed
- Give examples of evidence you can use to prove school improvement efforts
- Participate in the SLP WhatsApp Group
- Team-up with your Critical Friend

Day 2

- Access useful resources on the Sierra Leone Education Knowledge Platform
- Complete self-study tasks, including reflection questions
- Give examples of school-related data and evidence
- Use school-related data more effectively to inform school improvement decisions

What is the School Leadership Programme? – 10 minutes

Explain to school leaders the following points:

- The School Leadership Programme -also known by its acronym SLP- is a professional development course for school leaders in JSS and SSS, including Principals, Vice-Principals, Heads of Departments and other school leaders.
- The SLP builds knowledge, skills and values that enable you to assess your school's needs and make critical improvements to safety, inclusion, teaching and learning. The SLP emphasises the importance of leading school improvement in ways that have an impact on all learners, especially those who are often excluded from learning including girls, learners from low-income households, learners with disabilities, and pregnant and parenting learners.
- The SLP combines or blends a variety of ways of teaching and learning including F2F, self-study, in-school coaching and support, and remote coaching and support via WhatsApp.
- This means that as a participant in the SLP, you will be involved in F2F sessions, self-study, WhatsApp discussions, in-school coaching sessions, and you will work closely with the LLL who will offer advice and support throughout.
- Self-study is the key method used in the SLP. The quality of learning during the SLP depends on the amount of time and effort invested and the dedication of the school leader.

Invite school leaders to share any questions they have about the information you have shared.

What is the SLP schedule? (5 minutes)

Before you start, distribute the SLP Participant Guide.

Ask school leaders to find the course schedule in the SLP Participant Guide. Open the page with the SLP calendar and show it to them. Note that the guide you have in this document is different from the one in the SLP Participant Guide. Both are illustrative – you can adjust the weeks to fit with holidays and other events. The key point to emphasise is that all three modules must be completed in one academic year and one module must be completed each school term.

Share the following information with school leaders:

- The SLP involves self-study. However, moderation and group discussions are organised at the start of the week.
- It is a good practice to check the content of the course at the start of the week and work through the course tasks throughout the week.
- Do not leave the course content till the end of the week. Many tasks within the course are practical assignments that you will need to complete in the school. You may need to speak to a particular learner or organise a meeting with teachers during the week. If you leave the content until the end of the week, tasks from various weeks will pile-up and you will feel overwhelmed.
- Plan well. Check the content on Monday. Plan for when you will complete which tasks and try work through tasks throughout the week. Plan for about around an hour per day to complete tasks, read reference materials, and exchange ideas with other school leaders via group chats.

Invite school leaders to share any questions they have about the information you have shared.

What key words and concepts are used in the SLP? (10 minutes)

Share the following information with school leaders.

- The SLP is divided into four modules:
 - Foundation Module (the module you are doing now)
 - Module 1: Leading Safe and Inclusive Schools
 - Module 2: Leading Teaching and Learning
 - Module 3: Leading School Improvement
- The content for Module 1, 2 and 3 is presented in printed form in documents called Toolkits. Toolkits are like a workbook. They contain all the assignments, reading and other information you need to complete the Module. For the Foundation Module, you have a document called the Participant Guide.

Now distribute Toolkit 1 to school leaders.

Share the following information with school leaders.

- The Toolkits include all tasks that school leaders must complete during the SLP.
- All tasks must be completed in the Toolkit in legible handwriting. In case you need more space, you can securely attach a piece of paper to the Toolkit.
- LLLs will record their feedback on your progress in the Toolkit.
- School leaders' work in the Toolkits will be assessed. That means that all notes and evidence related to the task completion must be included in the Toolkits.
- Topics in the Toolkits are presented as Units and there is one per week (never more than one).

Now invite school leaders to look at Toolkit 1. Give them 5 minutes to flip through the Toolkit and explain that they will start using the Toolkit tomorrow. They can take it with them at the end of the day so they can look through it in the evening.

What support is offered to school leaders in the SLP? (20 minutes)

Share the following information with school leaders.

School leaders will be provided with support throughout the SLP to help them complete the programme successfully. The aim of this support is to help every participant achieve as much as possible and to translate their learning into meaningful school improvement. Support is also in place to help school leaders stay motivated and engaged as they complete the SLP and lead improvements in their schools.

Support offered includes:

F2F meetings and workshops – There is a Foundation Module at the start of the SLP to introduce the SLP and prepare you for study. The Foundation Module also includes an introduction to Toolkit 1. F2F activities provide an opportunity to distribute materials, ask questions, meet colleagues and they help create the sense of working as part of a team which can be motivating.

Coaching – As part of SLP, you have access to an LLL who can offer you professional support and advice, as well as connect you with the SLP wider team. The LLL visits you in your school at least twice each term, facilitates peer discussions and provides feedback and support throughout the programme. Coaching is aimed at being professional and supportive, so that you are well positioned to fully benefit from the SLP.

SLP Peer Support – As part of the SLP, you will interact with other school leaders. If you have questions about the content of the SLP, or you want to share your experience, ask a question, or ask for peer support/advice, you are encouraged to contact other school leaders in your group - or beyond. They are your peer mentors and you will become a peer mentor to others.

SLP Support Team – All logistical issues, such as distribution of SLP materials, and challenges that cannot be resolved by the LLL, are referred to the SLP Support Team. As a participant in the SLP, you have limited interactions with the SLP Support Team, but your LLL is in regular contact with them.

Internet – You need access to internet during the SLP to participate in WhatsApp discussions and calls with your peers and mentors. You also need it to access some resources referenced in the SLP toolkits. Internet access is not available everywhere in Sierra Leone and there may be periodic challenges with the internet quality. Be resourceful and find solutions that work for you in your situation. For example, you could wait to view a video until you are somewhere where the internet connectivity is better.

Reference materials – These materials include articles, videos, policies, briefs and other materials that are available on internet and extend the content of the course. You can find weblinks to materials in the toolkits.

Energiser (5 minutes)

Lead a short, fun energiser, or ask one of the school leaders to volunteer to lead the energiser.

How is performance in the SLP assessed? (1hr 45 minutes)

Explain the following information to school leaders.

Your work as part of the SLP is assessed. This means that the quality of the work you do is regularly reviewed by your LLL and others. The outcome of the assessment determines whether you receive a certificate confirming that you have successfully completed the SLP.

The SLP assessment is practical and is an integral part of the programme. Tasks that are assessed are clearly marked in each SLP Toolkit. These tasks form part of your assessed portfolio.

Completing your work in the printed toolkit ensures that you have a record of all your work in one place, and the feedback received. Remember, you submit completed toolkits for the assessment at the end of each module, and again at the end of the SLP. Keep them safe!

In summary, the SLP Assessment comprises:

- **Attendance and participation.** Your attendance and active participation in F2F sessions, coaching sessions and online/phone discussions is a critical part of your assessment.
- **Written answers.** The answers you write in your toolkits are assessed. Written responses are used to assess your knowledge and understanding of key concepts, your ability to use evidence to develop an argument, reflect on your practice, and your capacity to drive change in your school. The quality and academic rigour of your written responses are also assessed.
- **Uptake of feedback:** During the SLP, your LLL visits you in the school (ideally twice per module). School visits have several objectives. On a visit, the LLL sees you in the context of your school and your teaching team, and learns about the specific leadership challenges you face. The LLL witnesses the activities you undertake to make your school a safer and more inclusive learning environment for all learners. The LLL seeks evidence and testimonies of your actions from your fellow teachers, parents, learners and those who help govern the school. Also, you and the LLL engage in an honest professional discussion about your school improvement efforts, your successes and challenges you are facing. Jointly, you agree on strategies to make your efforts even more successful. Your engagement during these school visits and professional discussions forms part of your assessment.
- **Evidence of school improvement efforts:** During the SLP, school leaders undertake practical tasks to gain knowledge about the challenges and barriers to learning in the school. As part of the SLP, school leaders are asked to prioritise these challenges, prepare a plan for resolving them and take action to implement the plan, all with involvement from learners, parents, teachers, school governors and the wider community. Your plan and practical school-improvement efforts are part of your assessment. Evidence of your efforts may be in the form of testimonies, data collected in school (attendance, learning outcomes) or physical changes (for example a photograph of learning display, supported by testimonies of learners, and their test results).

Remind school leaders that improvements to teaching, learning, school safety and inclusion can be made without financial resources. For example: you can have a monthly meeting with teachers to discuss a professional issue or share teaching skills; you can organise a meeting with parents to share attendance data and discuss the importance of attending school and arriving on time for lessons.

Finally, remind school leaders that not all school improvement efforts are successful. Therefore, success is not assessed as part of the SLP. Instead, you are assessed on the evidence of your efforts to improve your school, your reflections and readiness to learn and persevere.

Ask school leaders to open the Toolkit 1 and go through one unit to explain the assessment tasks in that unit.

Ask school leaders to go through the Toolkit 1 in more detail during the evening and to note questions they may have about it. Explain that there will be time tomorrow to discuss these questions.

Energiser (5 minute)

Lead a short, fun energiser, or ask one of the school leaders to volunteer to lead the energiser.

Where to find SLP materials and resources? MBSSE Platform (10 minutes)

Explain to the school leaders that during the SLP they will be expected to watch videos, read key policies and other materials.

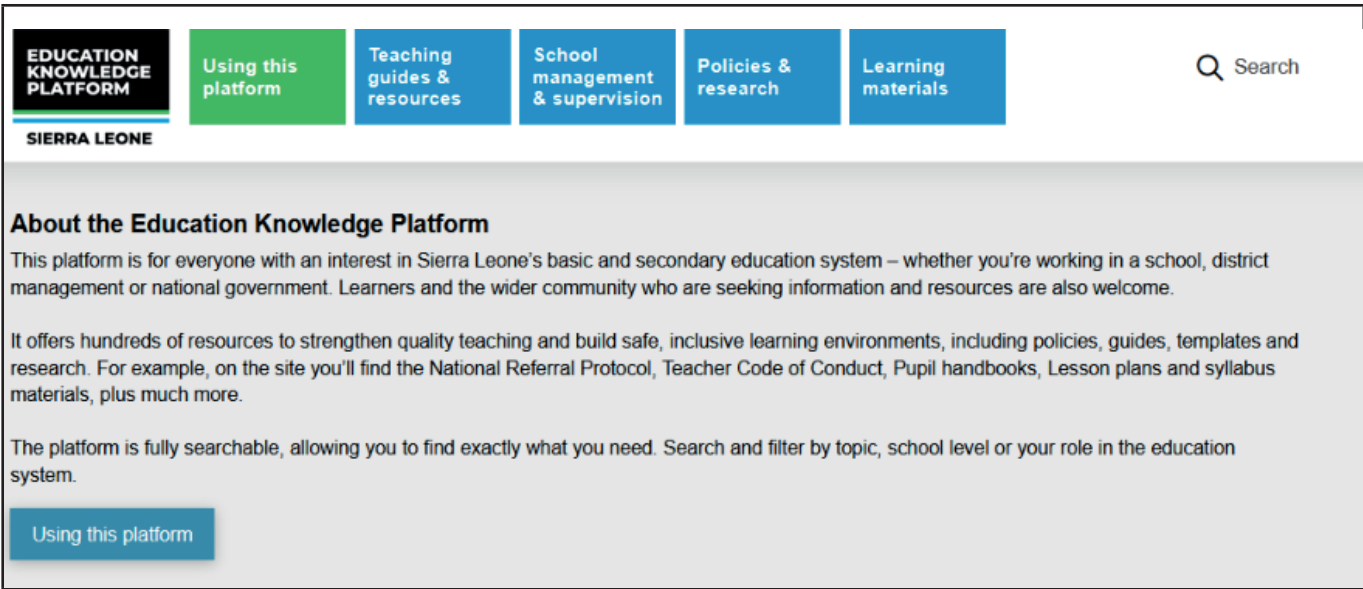
The materials that required for each module are listed on the introductory page of each unit in the Toolkit. These materials will also be shared by the LLL via WhatsApp and can be accessed online through a web browser.

Explain that some of these materials are also available on the MBSSE Knowledge platform.

Ask school leaders to connect to the internet and to access the MBSSE Knowledge Platform. Share the link to the platform via WhatsApp.

The link is: <https://mbsseknowledgeplatform.gov.sl/>

Explain that once they click the link they will be taken to the main page of the platform:



Explain that in the top part of the platform there is a panel through which they can access various resources, for example:

- Teaching guides and resources
- School management and supervision materials
- Policies and research studies
- Learning materials

Wait for everyone to access the main page of the platform.

Ask school leaders to spend time in the evening to get to know the platform and the resources that are included. Resources that relate to the SLP are here: <https://mbsseknowledgeplatform.gov.sl/material/slp>

As a homework, ask school leaders to find the National Referral Protocol poster on the platform and to download it to their phones. They can find it in the tab: Policies and Research. They need to click on it and then screen the resources to find the NRP Poster. Explain that we will use the Poster tomorrow. They should try and find it on their own, download it and bring it tomorrow.

Note to the LLL

This is a practical task to train the IT and browsing skills, so it is more important for the School Leader to try to find the Poster and learn how to do it than bring it tomorrow.

Questions and Answers (45 minutes)

Give school leaders post-it notes or paper.

Ask them to turn to the person sitting next to them and note questions they still have about the course. Give the pairs 10 minutes to note each other's questions.

After 10 minutes, open the floor for the pairs to ask these questions. Remind people not to repeat questions that have been asked already.

Try to answer the questions as you go. Encourage people to answer questions for each other if possible.

Collect all questions and after the session send them to the SLP Support team. The SLP Support team can use them to update the Frequently Asked Questions before they are shared again with school leaders.

Your commitment to the SLP (60 minutes)

Explain to school leaders that this course requires commitment and active participation. The extent of their learning and the improvements they achieve in their schools will depend largely on the effort and commitment they invest in the programme.

Invite school leaders to open their Participant Guide on the page with the MoU and invite them to quietly read its content.

Invite those who agree with the contents of the MoU to complete it and add their signature. After signing the memorandum, invite the school leaders to stand up with their Guides open on the page with the signed Memorandum and take a group photo of them holding their signed MoUs. This will be a nice reminder and a good memory that you will be able to use at graduation (if school leaders give their permission).

If someone does not want to sign the MoU, do not force them to do so. Arrange to meet them after the workshop to discuss their concerns. If they do not want to proceed, suggest they join the workshop the next day – in case they change their mind. But if they prefer not to proceed, do not force them to do so.

After the group photo, ask the school leaders to return to their seats and ask them to connect to the internet and join the WhatsApp Group you created for the SLP Course.

Wait for everyone to join the group. Check that everyone knows how to post in the group by asking them to write in the group a short message including their name, their school's name and their phone number.

After all school leaders have done so, ask them to note in their Guides:

- Your name
- Your WhatsApp number (display it on a flipchart)
- Your email address

Closing session – 30 minutes

Ensure that the school leaders are sitting in a circle and that everyone can see everyone else.

Ask school leaders to summarise the day with one word. Explain that they cannot repeat the words already said by others. This will help them focus on the task, listen to what others are saying and reflect on what they learned today.

Take part in this assessment too, so that school leaders know what you think of the day. Use only one word.

Thank everyone for today's participation and invite them to tomorrow's session. Remind everyone that we are meeting at 08:00.

Foundation Module – Day 2

Before the workshop starts, check the venue and seating arrangements, and check that you have everything you need.

Registration (15 minutes)

Check that everyone has signed the attendance register for Day 2. Also, if any details provided yesterday are unclear, ask people to correct them today.

Opening Session – 30 minutes

Ensure that everyone is sitting in a circle and that everyone can see everyone else.

Welcome the SLP school leaders.

Ask them to describe in maximum three words how they feel.

Tip to LLL:

Asking people how they feel today achieves two objectives – They are sharing struggles if they have any, so that you as a facilitator know that their mind or body may be disturbed and that they may need extra support from you this morning. Also, it helps the people settle and focus their minds on the tasks within the workshop.

This is also a way for school leaders to practice active listening, remind everyone of the fact that the group is governed by certain rules (only if they break them during this session).

Do not skip the opening session even if you are running late!

After everyone has shared how they feel today, remind them about today's objectives.

Explain that today we will look closely at Module 1 and that we will practice some of the tasks within Toolkit 1.

Explain that key concepts of Module 1 include:

- Exclusion and inclusion in education
- School-related and Gender-based violence
- Teacher Code of Conduct
- Safe schools
- Radical inclusion
- School improvement

Ensure that everyone has Toolkit 1.

How did we do with our homework? (10 minutes)

Remind the group about the homework task you set. The homework was:

- To go through the Toolkit 1 and note any questions
- To access the MBSSE Platform and download the NRP Poster

Explain that today we will start by exploring going Toolkit 1 in more detail. As we work through the Toolkit, we will use the NRP Poster, and we will create additional opportunities to access the resources available on the MBSSE Platform.

A closer look at Toolkit 1 and pre-assessment (20 minutes)

Say to school leaders: As part of the homework most of us looked through the Toolkit 1. We already learned yesterday that Toolkit 1 is divided into 10 Units and that each of them takes about a week to complete.

In the first unit we find “Introduction to inclusion and pre-assessment”.

Pre-assessment is a questionnaire that all participants fill before engaging with any SLP materials. It is part of Unit 1 and provides an honest look at the situation in our schools and our own understanding of inclusion.

Let’s open Toolkit 1 to the pre-assessment section and take a few minutes to answer the questions.

For each statement, tick 1 if the practice or action has not yet been achieved in your school, and tick 4 if it has been fully achieved.

Let’s look at the first question: “The Teacher’s Code of Conduct is displayed for all to see in my school.” If this is true in your school, and the Teacher’s Code of Conduct is displayed on a school board or painted into a school wall, you can tick 4. If the Teacher’s Code of Conduct is displayed but only in the Principal’s office, you may want to tick 2. If the Teacher’s Code of Conduct is not displayed at all or if you are not sure whether it is displayed, you should tick 1.

Go through all the questions and answer them as honestly as you can. Do not answer in the way things should be, but in the way they are today in your school.

Do not worry! Nobody will judge you or your school based on these answers. These answers are for you, to also help you identify some of the first changes you can start working on within your school.

	1	2	3	4
Example: <i>My school can provide safe and inclusive learning for all</i>		✓		
The Teacher Code of Conduct is displayed for all to see in my school.				
My school has a record showing that all teachers and other education personnel in the school have signed the Teacher Code of Conduct this academic year.				
My school has taken action to prevent violence in school, I can share evidence of this action. (E.g. all canes have been removed from school and there is no corporal punishment, key messages on prohibiting different types of violence have been shared in assembly this month.)				
All adults and pupils in our school can explain the reporting and referral mechanisms related to violence and safety.				
The reporting and referral mechanisms related to violence and safety have been communicated to all through staff meetings, school assembly and posters displayed around the school.				
My school has a process in place to identify children who need additional support and/or are at risk of dropping out of school. I can explain the process to my LLL.				
My school regularly assesses the barriers to learning and takes action to remove barriers. I can give an example of my school doing this for specific learners (e.g. pregnant girls, children with disabilities) within the last month.				

Give the school leaders 10 minutes to answer the pre-assessment.

To check the honesty of the answers and create an opportunity to bring a lighter spirit, ask school leaders about their answer to the question:

“All adults and pupils in our school can explain the reporting and referral mechanisms related to violence and safety.”

Ask school leaders who of them ticked 4 or 3. If there is anyone who ticked 4 or 3, ask them to explain what that reporting mechanism is.

Regardless of the answer, ask school leaders to display the NRP Poster on their devices, the one that they downloaded from the MBSSE Platform as part of the homework.

Ask them to assess whether the mechanism presented by their colleague is in line with the NRP.

Say to everyone: Let’s make sure that we mark our pre-assessment and all our tasks in a factual manner, so that we can stand and defend our answers with confidence. If something is not ideal, let’s say so. Only after admitting that something is not ideal and needs a change can we aim at improving it.

Give people 5 minutes to check and correct their pre-assessment. Then move on to the next task.

How to compose our answers? A closer look to self-study tasks (1 hour)

Say to school leaders: Let's open our Toolkits at Unit 2, Task 4.

Give them time to find the Unit 2 and Task 4. Do not give them the page number, until you have the confidence that most of them have found it without referring to the page number.

Now say: This task is a self-study task. This means that the task requires you to take your learning into your own hands. In most of these tasks you need to read some materials and refer that reading in your answer.

At the top of the page, you see the task number and the task title. Then in the green part you see a comment that this is a graded assignment in which understanding of the problem, clarity of your response and the use of evidence are assessed.



Task 4

Self-study information and questions. Barriers to learning in Sierra Leone Secondary Schools

This is a graded assignment. In this assignment you will be assessed on your understanding of barriers to learning faced by learners and the opportunities to overcome these barriers. Write in clear language, use good hand-writing and correct spelling before submitting.

Explain that the green part serves as a reminder of the competencies being assessed.

Say: I will read out the task and the first example, and we will jointly work on the answer to the first example.

Below are some quotations from our secondary schools in Sierra Leone. They were collected during recent research¹ by MBSSE and Leh Wi Lan. They show real barriers faced by real children in our schools.

Read each example carefully. Write down what you would do to support the learner in each example.



"In my area there is a teacher who expressed interest in the school girl, the girl said she is not interested. So, when she comes to school, he beats her. Anytime he will give her assignment and even if she did the assignment and submitted it to him, he will say she did not do it correctly and fail her, just because of the interest he has in her".

Member of a low-income household in Western Rural

My response to improve the situation for this learner:

(For example, what laws and regulations are broken within this situation? What steps would you take to address the situation?

Would you report the situation, why, how? What would you say to the teacher? How would you ensure the pupil is safe in school? How would you maintain confidentiality? How would you ensure it didn't happen again?)

Say: In this task you are asked to reflect what you would do in the situation described. In your response, do not just use your own judgement. Explain what guides your actions. For example, if your response is informed by the Teacher's Code of Conduct, the Radical Inclusion Policy or the National Referral Protocol, mention the relevant document and explain how it guides your decision-making and actions.

Read out the top example:

	"In my area there is a teacher who expressed interest in the school girl, the girl said she is not interested. So, when she comes to school, he beats her. Anytime he will give her assignment and even if she did the assignment and submitted it to him, he will say she did not do it correctly and fail her, just because of the interest he has in her". Member of a low-income household in Western Rural
---	--

Give guiding prompts:

Identify the problems in this situation. Think of the documents that can guide you in such situation. Explain how you would use these documents or policies to act in this situation.

Draft your answer on a piece of paper.

Give school leaders 20 minutes to work on their answer. While they work on their answers individually, walk around the room and check whether they need any support.

After 20 minutes, ask school leaders to work in pairs. Ask each pair to swap their answers and read each other's responses. Once they have read them, ask the pairs to compare their answers and provide each other with feedback. Give the pairs 15 minutes to do this activity.

After 15 minutes, ask them to use the feedback they received from their pair partner to improve their answer. Give 10 minutes to do this.

After they have improved their answers, ask for 2 or 3 volunteers to read out their answers. Ask the group to give supportive feedback by stating three strengths and one suggestion of improvement.

When providing feedback, make sure the feedback relates to:

- **Quality of the analysis of the problems stated in the example.** These include sexual harassment, breach of Teacher's Code of Conduct, school-related violence, gender-based violence, corporal punishment, mobbing/bullying, abuse of authority.
- **Knowledge of the policies and documents** that can guide the response such as the Basic and Senior Secondary Education Act (2023), Teacher's Code of Conduct, National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence (2012-2018), National Policy on Radical Inclusion in School (2021) or National Referral Protocol.
- **Ability to identify firm action.** This can include: a caring and supportive response to the learner, follow the National Referral Protocol, inform the Relevant Focal Point within the School Leadership Team and agree the way forward.
- **Ability to explain ideas in writing.** This means the ability to present the ideas in a clear, linguistically correct way, and the ability to refer evidence and documents.

Say that if everyone is happy with their answers after the discussion, they can write them in the Toolkit in the space provided. By doing this, they have already started the course. Congratulate them for making a successful start to the SLP!

Below are some quotations from our secondary schools in Sierra Leone. They were collected during recent research¹ by MBSSE and Leh Wi Lan. They show real barriers faced by real children in our schools.

Read each example carefully. Write down what you would do to support the learner in each example.



"In my area there is a teacher who expressed interest in the school girl, the girl said she is not interested. So, when she comes to school, he beats her. Anytime he will give her assignment and even if she did the assignment and submitted it to him, he will say she did not do it correctly and fail her, just because of the interest he has in her".

Member of a low-income household in Western Rural

My response to improve the situation for this learner:

(For example, what laws and regulations are broken within this situation? What steps would you take to address the situation?

Would you report the situation, why, how? What would you say to the teacher? How would you ensure the pupil is safe in school? How would you maintain confidentiality? How would you ensure it didn't happen again?)

Invite everyone to take a short break.

Energiser – 5 minutes

Lead a short, fun energiser, or ask one of the school leaders to volunteer to lead the energiser.

Practicing the use of the MBSSE Platform (30 minutes)

Explain to school leaders: In many tasks you will need to access materials from the Internet. Most of the materials used within the SLP are listed in the MBSSE Platform, so let's continue learning how to use it.

Say: Please raise your hand if you managed to locate the NRP Poster last night and without any help from others.

NATIONAL REFERRAL PROTOCOL: HOW DO I REFER A REPORT OF VIOLENCE?

STEP 1

Provide a caring and supportive response

- ✓ Tell the child it's not their fault, that you believe them, and you can help.
- ✓ Check with the child that they are OK for you to contact the Principal and School Safety Committee (SSC) for guidance.
- ✓ Assure the child you will not contact the perpetrator or anyone connected to them.
- ✓ Do not ask questions about how the incident occurred.

STEP 2

Contact a trusted adult

- ✓ Ask the child who they would like you to contact for support (e.g. parent or caregiver).
- ✓ Explain to the child and accompanying adult that services will support them and keep them safe.
- ✓ Ensure the child and accompanying adult understand that all services will maintain confidentiality.
- ✓ Get permission from the child to contact services. If permission is not given, referrals must be anonymous.

STEP 3

Explain the next steps

- ✓ Clearly explain the steps below and services to the child and accompanying adult. Ensure they understand.
- ✓ Contact necessary services, as advised by the SSC or Principal: hospital, One Stop Centre, Rainbo Centre, case worker, Family Support Unit, police.
- ✓ Ensure the child is taken to a medical facility if they are in pain or have survived a sexual assault (within 72 hours of the incident).
- ✓ Report any cases of sexual violence to the police (only information the child gives you permission to share).
- ✓ Consider additional needs the child has (e.g. a hearing impaired child may require a sign language interpreter).
- ✓ Explain that a case worker and legal professional will support them throughout.
- ✓ Explain additional support from specialist services (e.g. psychosocial support, legal advice).
- ✓ Report the case to the Teaching Services Commission if the perpetrator works at the school or in education.

STEP 4

Maintain confidentiality

- ✓ If you feel worried or upset after dealing with a report, only seek support from people involved in the referral (e.g. the Principal or SSC.)
- ✓ Do not discuss the incident with anyone other than the relevant services who need to know about it.

OUR LOCAL SERVICES

Leh Wi Lan
Improving Secondary Education in Sierra Leone



This poster was produced under Leh Wi Lan, a six-year programme that supports the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) to improve learning outcomes for boys and girls at secondary school and to increase enrolment, retention and wellbeing of girls and children with disabilities. Leh Wi Lan is managed by Cambridge Education and funded by UK aid from the UK government. For more information: <https://mbsse.gov.sl/leh-wi-lan>

If there are any school leaders who did not manage to do so, pair them up with someone who managed to access it and let the pairs do the task together.

Explain that in Unit 3 they will need that **poster**.

Explain that in Unit 3, they will also need **Teacher's Code of Conduct**.

Ask them to access the MBSSE Platform and click on "**Teaching guides and resources**"

**EDUCATION
KNOWLEDGE
PLATFORM**

SIERRA LEONE

Using this
platform

Teaching
guides &
resources

School
management
& supervision

Policies &
research

Learning
materials

Search

About the Education Knowledge Platform

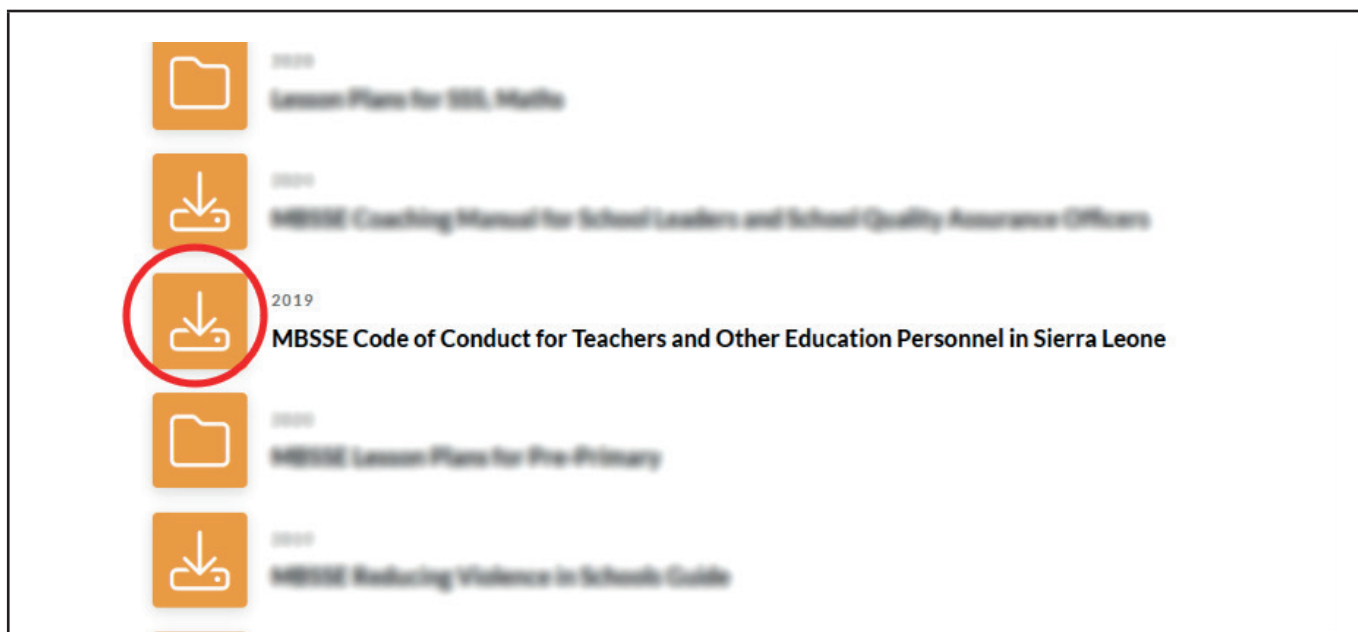
This platform is for everyone with an interest in Sierra Leone's basic and secondary education system – whether you're working in a school, district management or national government. Learners and the wider community who are seeking information and resources are also welcome.

It offers hundreds of resources to strengthen quality teaching and build safe, inclusive learning environments, including policies, guides, templates and research. For example, on the site you'll find the National Referral Protocol, Teacher Code of Conduct, Pupil handbooks, Lesson plans and syllabus materials, plus much more.

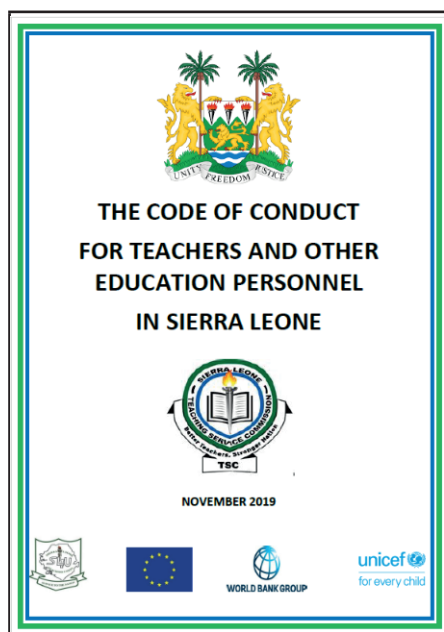
The platform is fully searchable, allowing you to find exactly what you need. Search and filter by topic, school level or your role in the education system.

Using this platform

In the list of the resources, ask school leaders to find:



Ask school leaders to click on it and download it to their device.



Wait for everyone to do so. Congratulate them and say that now they have downloaded at least two documents that they will be using in Unit 3.

Encourage school leaders to continue exploring and reading the resources hosted on the MBSSE Knowledge Platform.

How to compose answers? A closer look at the reflection questions (1 hour)

Ask school leaders to open their Toolkit 1 at Unit 4, Task 1.

Say: As part of Task 1 in Unit 4, we need to read the Basic and Senior Secondary School Act, 2023, and the section that relates to about corporal punishment.

Ask school leaders: Where do you think you can find the Basic and Senior Secondary School Act, 2023?

They should be able to say: **at the MBSSE Platform.**

Confirm that and say that the Basic and Senior Secondary School Act states:

The Basic and Senior Secondary Education Act

72. (1) Corporal punishment and all other forms of degrading punishment designed to cause, or create fear of physical pain in a pupil, administered or threatened for the purposes of domination or control are prohibited.

"corporal punishment" means any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort.

Say to everyone: After reading the Basic and Senior Secondary School Act, we also ask you to view a video related to the topic:

<https://www.facebook.com/CRTVweb/videos/869139624318599/>

Explain: The video is available on Facebook. However, you do not need a Facebook account to watch it. You can access the video using the link provided in the digital version of your Toolkit or the link shared in our WhatsApp Group. Please take a moment now to try to access the video from the WhatsApp Group.

You should give everyone a few minutes to watch the video.

After watching the video say: Well done! You just completed the first task of the Unit 4, which also is a foundation stone of other tasks within that unit. Let's have a look at Task 3, Unit 4.

Say: Open your Toolkit at Unit 4, Task 3.



Task 3

Reflection questions: Why should we stop corporal punishment?

This is a graded assignment. You will be guided to imagine yourself in the position of someone receiving corporal punishment and are expected to demonstrate empathy and understanding of how learners feel facing corporal punishment in school. You should understand and explain the long lasting negative consequences of corporal punishment on pupils.

Use clear language, neat hand-writing, and correct spelling. Remember to proof-read your responses before the submission.

Say: You can see that this is a graded task because it includes guidance on how to complete it. Now, let's read the instructions:

Corporal punishment is an example of violence. Earlier we discussed SRGBV is not tolerated because it can have long-lasting negative impact. This is also true for corporal punishment.

Imagine one day you had to take your child to hospital in the morning, because of this you arrived one hour late at your School Leadership training session. The LLL who was leading the session flogged you in front of everyone. How would you feel?

Explain to school leaders: In the reflection questions, you are asked to consider a situation faced by another person and think how would you feel if you were in the same situation. These questions encourage you to consider different perspectives and treat others with the same respect you would like to be treated.

Say: Individually, read the first question and make notes about your feelings, thoughts and reflections. After you have done this, find a person you have not worked with much yet and discuss your responses.

After discussing the question with your partner, you may want to write your response in the space provided in your toolkit.

After everyone has completed the task, invite them for lunch.

Energiser – 5 minutes

Lead a short, fun energiser, or ask one of the school leaders to volunteer to lead the energiser.

Introduction to data and evidence collection and analysis methods – 15 minutes

Explain to school leaders that many of the tasks included in the SLP require them to read reference materials and gather information from their schools. Ask them to brainstorm the following question:

What data does every school collect that can be a useful source of information about school safety, inclusion, teaching and learning?

They might suggest some or all the following:

- Student attendance data
- Teacher attendance data
- Continuous Assessment Scores (CAS)
- Exam results
- Student report cards

- Meeting minutes – from School Safety Committee meetings, Board of Governor meetings, Parent Teacher Association meetings
- SQAQO reports
- Classroom observation reports

If any of the above sources have not been mentioned, share them. Then explain that, in addition to these formal sources of information, we also have informal information sources. These include students, teachers, parents, community members, and information collected through day-to-day observation of what is happening in the school.

Explain that while all these sources of information are useful, school leaders in the SLP will need to make an explicit effort to gather more, first-hand information through conversations (formal, informal), interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and research. Using data and evidence from multiple sources and triangulating this information can enrich our understanding of a problem and identify appropriate solutions.

Explain that throughout the course we expect school leaders to demonstrate their understanding of available sources of evidence and their ability to use it. The use of evidence is part of the SLP assessment.

How to collect data and evidence at school? Practical data, evidence collection and analysis methods – 45 minutes

Say: It is important that everyone knows what evidence to collect, how to triangulate it and how to use it to complete a task.

Explain: When you use evidence from reference materials, you need to indicate the source of this information or evidence. If you use a quote from a learner, the quote must be marked by quotation marks and followed by information about the learner, for example: JSS, Female learner.

Say: Let's practice collecting and using evidence to completing tasks. Please open Toolkit 1 at Unit 2 and let's look at Task 2.



Task 2

Self-study questions: Looking at my school through learners' eyes

Remember this is a graded assignment. Use clear language, neat hand-writing, and correct spelling.

Say: In this task we are going to speak to real learners in our school. In the first part of this task, we will speak with a girl from a low-income family. Let's read the instruction.

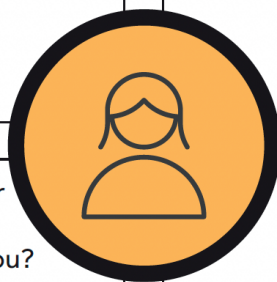
A day in your school as a girl from a low-income family.

Talk to a girl in your school, family or neighbourhood to hear about her daily school experience. Ask her the questions from the template below. You could give out the questions to the girl as a written questionnaire if you think she might be more comfortable to respond honestly in that way. Don't include the girl's name anywhere, this is anonymous and just an example.

Answer the questions in the template below.

1. Arrival at school - Are you likely to arrive at school on time? What are some of the factors that may affect your punctuality and attendance? What tasks are you likely to have before the school? What transport mode are you using?

2. Lessons - Are you able to concentrate? Did you eat breakfast before the lessons? Do you have a notebook? Do you have a pen? How does your uniform look? Are you on your period? What worries you may have related to your period? Are you prepared for lessons?



3. Break-time - How do you spend your break? Do you have lunch or money to buy lunch? How do other pupils treat you?

4. Friendships - Who is your friend? How are you supported by your friend? What are some of the reasons that you appreciate your friend?

Ask school leaders: When completing the task you will have various sources of information. You will have information gained directly from the girl. What other sources of information you may consider when analysing her situation? Ask them to think about:

- Data that they can obtain from the teachers
- Data that they can collect from other learners
- Data that they can collect from other sources.

Brainstorm with the group for a few minutes. Then ask school leaders to work in pairs with someone they have not worked closely with yet.

Ask the pairs to think of different sources and types of data they can obtain at school. Ask them to:

- List data that they can obtain from the teachers
- List data that they can collect directly from a learner
- List data that they can collect from other learners
- List data that they can collect from other sources
- List some of the data collection methods they can use.

Ask the pairs to note their answers.

Give 5 minutes for each of the data sources and 5 minutes to organise their answers, a total of 30 minutes.

Ask one pair to summarise their answers. Encourage pairs to suggest ideas like:

- List data that they will collect from the teachers
 - Attendance record / lateness log
 - Performance data
- List data that they will collect from a learner
 - Examples of work
 - Testimony/feedback
- List data that they can collect from other learners
 - Testimony/feedback
- List data that they can collect from other sources
 - If this is safe, parents or siblings can be consulted
- List some of the data collection methods
 - Data collected by teachers
 - Interview
 - Formal and informal observation.

Encourage school leaders to use more than one source of information and more than one type of evidence. Explain that as teachers we all have strong views and sometimes we think we know what the problem is, but if we really try to understand something in more depth, we may find that our initial perception is incomplete or sometimes wrong. This is why it is so important to use more than one type of evidence and more than one source. When thinking of solutions, people who are affected by the solution often need to be consulted and be part of the solution making proposal. They need to take an active role.

In our example, the girl can suggest solutions to her lateness.

Underline the point that **no learner is too young to be consulted and can be a part of the process to identify a solution**. Encourage school leaders to take the opportunity in the SLP to learn more about the learners in their schools.

Questions and answers (30 minutes)

Give everyone post-it notes or paper.

Ask them to turn to the person sitting next to them and note questions they still have about the SLP or Toolkit 1. Give pairs 10 minutes to note their questions.

After everyone has written their questions, open the floor for the pairs to ask. They should not repeat the questions others have already asked.

Answer the questions as you go and invite school leaders to answer each other's questions if they can.

Closing session (30 minutes)

Ensure that school leaders are sitting in a circle and that everyone can see everyone else.

Ask school leaders to summarise their feelings about starting the SLP in one word. Invite them to listen carefully to what others are saying. Do they feel the same or differently? Remember to take part in this activity yourself.

Do not skip this task! This is an important opportunity for team building.

Thank everyone for their participation and remind them how they can contact you. Remind everyone about the date for the first online discussion. Let them also know that you will be contacting them to set up a date for your first visit to them in their school. Wish them good luck with the SLP and a safe journey home.



The School Leadership Programme was developed by the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) in Sierra Leone with funding from the UK government through the Leh Wi Lan programme, part of the second phase of the Sierra Leone Secondary Education Improvement Programme (SSEIP II).



School Leadership Programme Foundations

Guide for Local Leaders of Learning 2026