



FINAL REPORT

Design for the National School Leadership Programme of Sierra Leone

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Abbreviations and key terms

BoG	Board of Governors
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CTA	Community-Teacher Association
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (UK Government)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
LLL	Local Leader of Learning
MBSSE	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLL	National Leader of Learning
PLC	Professional Learning Communities
SMC	School Management Committee
SQAO	School Quality Assurance Officer
TSC	Teaching Service Commission

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

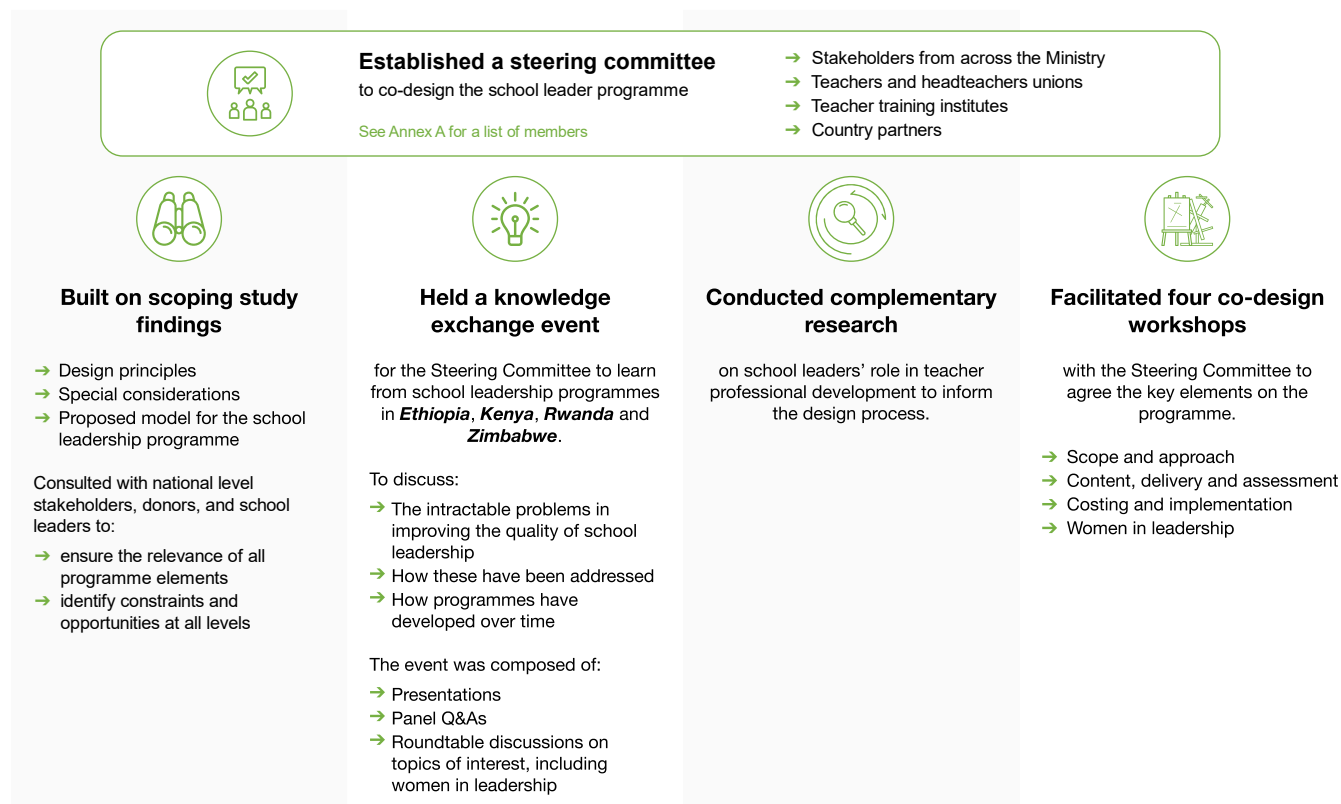
The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) recognises the importance of school leadership for all children to receive quality education in Sierra Leone and has made training, support and professional development for school leaders one of their top priorities. As a result, the Sierra Leone School Leadership Consortium was established - composed of the TSC in partnership with the Education Commission, Education Development Trust, EducAid and Fab Inc - to lead the design of a new system-wide approach to school leadership.

The consortium produced an initial scoping report between September 2021 and January 2022, this revealed that while the school leader recruitment and appointment process is well understood, responsibility for management, training, and professional development of school leaders is unclear. The scoping showed that there is some existing support for school leaders by government and NGOs, however, it is piecemeal, varies widely in content and issues covered, and is not system wide. The findings from the needs analysis and stakeholder engagement highlighted a need for a framework for school leader development and more continuous forms of professional development such as coaching, professional networks and peer learning. Analysis of school leader data also showed that there is a large need to support and promote women in school and middle leadership positions.

1.2. Programme design process

The consortium leveraged its experience with the Sierra Leone education sector, trusted relationships with the government and other stakeholders and expertise of designing and implementing school leader programmes across Africa and harnessed a **learning partnership approach**, to co-design the system-wide school leader framework and programme. This approach aimed to ensure that each partner was a critical 'co-creator' involved in every stage of the process. The design approach was undertaken in iterative cycles which overlapped, allowing for deeper reflection on challenges that arose and new insights to feed back into the programme design process. The process involved several key elements as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Key elements of the programme design process



1.3. Programme overview

The design of the programme is divided into six key areas, each of which will be described in the following sections of the report:

1. Approach, vision and design principles
2. Focus and content
3. Delivery model
4. Assessment
5. Accreditation
6. Monitoring, evaluation and learning

These are followed by three sections on costing, implementing and piloting the programme.

7. Costing
8. Implementation
9. Pilot

2. Approach, vision & design principles

2.1. Approach and vision

The approach for the school leader programme was drafted during the initial scoping phase and validated during the design process:

Approach

A system wide approach to school leadership training and professional development leveraging the existing whole team model of school quality and improvement and recognising the role of school leaders in each education system priority.

The approach is driven by a strong and clear vision for school leadership:

Vision

Sierra Leone has qualified and capable school leaders who are lifelong learners and continuously develop their knowledge, skills and values to ensure universal access, comprehensive safety, radical inclusion and quality teaching and learning in order to meet the education system goals.

The vision and approach will support Sierra Leone to address the priorities outlined in the new [Education Sector Plan \(2022-2026\)](#):

- **Universal access:** Every child has the right to access and complete quality basic education and secondary education and have equal opportunity to tertiary education
- **Comprehensive safety:** Every student has the right to learn in an environment that is physically and psychologically safe and free from all forms of abuse
- **Radical inclusion:** Every child, regardless of gender, ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, disability status, or other circumstances has the right to receive a quality education that is appropriate to their needs
- **Quality teaching and learning:** Every student has the right to attend schools and learning institutions that provide quality teaching, learning and skills development opportunities that support their cognitive, social, and emotional development

2.2. Design principles

During the scoping and design process, a set of core principles were agreed to help structure the programme. These are categorised around three key areas – national policy and guidelines, scope and content and delivery.

National policy to support the school leadership programme should ensure:

1. A vision for school leadership is agreed and embedded in relevant legislation and policy to ensure a coherent approach to school leadership across the education system.
2. Mandates for school leaders are aligned across all relevant legislation and policy to ensure clarity of responsibility and coherence across governing bodies
3. The vision and mandates guide a system-wide approach to school leadership development with aligned accountability.
4. A national level job description for school leaders is updated and communicated that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities for school leaders and their relationship to other roles, such as School Quality Assurance Officers and School Management Committees/Board of Governors.
5. Data on school leaders is collected and used to inform design and management of the school leadership programme.

The **scope and content** of the national school leadership programme should:

1. Target school leaders and aim to strengthen roles at system level to support school leaders
2. Provide orientation for new leaders and continued professional development for existing leaders
3. Cover education system priorities, align with existing professional standards and school leader policy, and address school leader needs
4. Train leaders in a set of knowledge areas and competences that are based on evidence for improving teaching and learning outcomes in all phases of education
5. Be designed as a continuum, identifying stages and associated steps in the development of effective leadership for learning
6. “Meet leaders where they are” recognising their current knowledge, skills and experience and building their capability over time
7. Provide opportunities and sets expectations for continuous learning and improvement which responds to identified gaps and needs

In terms of **delivery**, the school leadership programme should:

- Offer school leaders a recognised qualification or license
- Aim to be formally certified
- Provide practical, ongoing support for leaders using existing structures
- Include coaching and peer learning between more effective and competent leaders with those who are less competent or effective
- Be based on principles of effective adult learning

- Be designed to be inclusive, actively aiming to provide extra support to female leaders and strengthen their influence as role models
- Be designed to be adaptive and based on feedback from central data as well as programme data and research
- Identify bright spots of existing good practice, ensuring to help share and sustain these
- Include assessment of leadership quality and performance in the short, medium and long term
- Align with school leaders' job descriptions and reinforce existing accountability/management structures in Sierra Leone

3. Focus & content

3.1. A focus on instructional leadership through a competency-based approach

Evidence on instructional leadership

Research and practice-based evidence shows that school leaders who develop, embed, and sustain a set of key leadership competencies, can deliver sustainable improvements to teaching and learning in schools. Reorienting at least one school leadership role (principal or deputy principal) to instructional leadership has been shown to increase learning outcomes.¹ Instructional leadership can include transforming schools into sites of professional development through mentoring and coaching, facilitating peer learning, ensuring teachers work collaboratively to facilitate improvement in instructional practices, and encouraging a focus on shared goals.²

Instructional leaders need to be able to draw on diagnostic evidence of performance (including lesson observations, learning outcomes data, indicators of learner well-being, equity, and inclusion) benchmarked against contextually relevant standards, and to select from a range of evidence-based teaching strategies.³ There is evidence of the impact of school leader training using student data for decision making and school improvement plans, but they must be supported to do so.⁴

Importantly, the most effective leaders have strong moral and ethical purposes and a strong sense of social justice.⁵

Why focus on instructional leadership in Sierra Leone?

In support of Sierra Leone's sector priorities and Radical Inclusion policy, the school leadership programme aims to improve the **learning outcomes of all children**, especially students from disadvantaged groups, including students with disabilities and girls, especially pregnant girls and adolescent parents, and those living in challenging socio-economic conditions as well as rural and remote areas. This will be achieved by supporting school leaders to take a whole school approach to improving the quality of teaching and learning in their schools, and to work in partnership with stakeholders in local communities to overcome barriers to education for all.

¹ Robinson, Viviane, Claire Lloyd, and Kenneth Rowe. 2008. "The Impact of Leadership on Student Outcomes: An Analysis of the Differential Effects of Leadership Types." *Educational Administration Quarterly* 44 (5): 635-674.

² Chrispeels, Janet, Salvador Castillo, and Janet Brown. 2000. "School Leadership Teams: A Process Model of Team Development." *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 11(1): 20-56.

³ Education Commission. 2019. *Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation*. New York: Education Commission.

⁴ Barros, R., Franco, S., Carvalho, M., Garcia, B., Henriques, R., & Machado, L. (2019). *Assessment of the Impact of the Jovem de Futuro Programme on Learning (English)*. The World Bank; de Hoyos, R., Ganimian, A., & Holland, P. (2019) *Teaching with the test: Experimental evidence on diagnostic feedback and capacity-building for schools in Argentina (Policy Research Working Paper No. WPS8261)*. Impact Evaluation Series. The World Bank; Lassibille, G. (2014). Improving the management style of school principals: Results from a randomised trial. *Education Economics*, 24(2), 121–141. doi:10.1080/0964529 2.2014.985288

⁵ James, C., Connolly, M., Dunning, G. and Elliott, T. (2006) *How very effective primary schools work*. London: Sage; Begley, P. and Johansson, O. (2003) *The ethical dimensions of school leadership*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

A competency-based approach to instructional leadership

A competency-based approach is one that ensures school leaders can demonstrate application of a set of knowledge, skills and behaviours that improve teaching and learning. It also helps 'meet school leaders where they are' acknowledging their leadership journey, current knowledge and experience, and giving them a way to grow and progress over time. The framework acts as a roadmap so school leaders can see what success looks like in clear practical ways at various levels.

Competencies allow leaders to assess their own strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement and chart their own progress. It also helps them to do this with peers, learning with other school leaders and providing mutual support.

The Steering Committee have agreed that the school leadership programme in Sierra Leone should prioritise instructional leadership through a competency-based design. The competency framework will serve as the foundation for all the learning and assessment throughout the programme.

3.2. The competency framework for the Sierra Leone school leadership programme

The competency framework is based on research and evidence of what works for instructional leadership to improve teaching and learning.⁶ It sits at the heart of the national school leadership programme and it is designed to meet the context and needs in Sierra Leone.

The competency framework is composed of five key competencies, with each one broken down into a set of related and observable sub-competencies which describe specific actions and behaviours. School leaders who complete the leadership programme will be able to:

- **Competency 1:** Demonstrate a commitment to improving learning outcomes and promoting inclusion
- **Competency 2:** Promote a culture of continuous self-sustaining school improvement
- **Competency 3:** Model and guide leadership for learning for the inclusion and safety of all within the school
- **Competency 4:** Use evidence to plan, implement and review improvements to inclusion and learning
- **Competency 5:** Work collectively with all stakeholders to drive school and system improvement

These five competencies have proven impact in improving teaching and learning based on international evidence and best practice and are based on those developed by Education Development Trust as part of the FCDO-funded leadership development programmes in Ethiopia and Rwanda.

Through the design process, these competencies and sub-competencies have been reviewed and adapted based on input from the Steering Committee. This is to ensure that the competencies and associated criteria for each level suit the context and needs of school leaders in Sierra Leone.

⁶ Day, Christopher and Pamela Sammons. 2016. Successful school leadership. Reading: Education Development Trust.

The competencies are aligned with the Education Sector Plan 2022-2026 priorities and nine objectives,⁷ the Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders in Sierra Leone and the Radical Inclusion Policy.

The competencies are central to the programme monitoring and evaluation plan. The competency framework maps and measures the progress of each school leader against the competencies throughout the course of the programme, identifying the impact of school leadership on improving the quality of teaching and learning.

The final competency framework developed for Sierra Leone with inputs from the Steering Committee is included in Annex B.

Alignment with the professional standards for teachers and school leaders and the radical inclusion policy

The competencies set a standard for effective school leadership. As such, they were mapped to the existing Professional Standards for School Leaders in Sierra Leone to ensure a single coherent and consistent set of expectations for school leadership development. The Professional Standards demonstrate the defining vision for inspirational and impactful leadership that will guide and support improvements in student learning and well-being. Through development of the agreed competencies, school leaders can demonstrate application of the five Professional Standards:

- **Standard 1:** Nurture self for leadership excellence
- **Standard 2:** Lead professional knowledge
- **Standard 3:** Lead professional practice
- **Standard 4:** Lead professional engagement
- **Standard 5:** Lead organisational management and transformation engagement

Existing sub-standards that were not within the scope of the competencies focused on instructional leadership – such as those largely defining personal leadership skills and functions regarding HR processes, financial management, maintenance of school facilities and external relations – were agreed to be monitored through other processes, such as school inspection by SQAOs, so the programme can maintain focus on leading teaching and learning for improved learning outcomes.

The agreed competencies were also mapped to the Radical Inclusion policy to ensure that every school leader participating in the programme will have a clear understanding of what Radical Inclusion means through embedding it in the competency framework.

⁷ 1. Strengthen the instructional core 2. Recruit, retain, and support excellent educators 3. Reduce gender and other disparities in educational access, experience, and outcomes for the most marginalised 4. Provide safe, protective, and conducive learning environments for all 5. Strengthen governance, management, and accountability for performance 6. Enhance emergency prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery 7. Eliminate corruption in education Student Universal Access Radical Inclusion Quality Teaching and Learning Comprehensive Safety 8. Strengthen partnerships in support of learning and work readiness 9. Increase the use of data and technology to support learning and education service delivery

The mapping of the competency framework to the Professional Standards and the Radical Inclusion policy can be found in Annex C.

3.3. Competency continuum & sample toolkits

A competency-based continuum of professional development

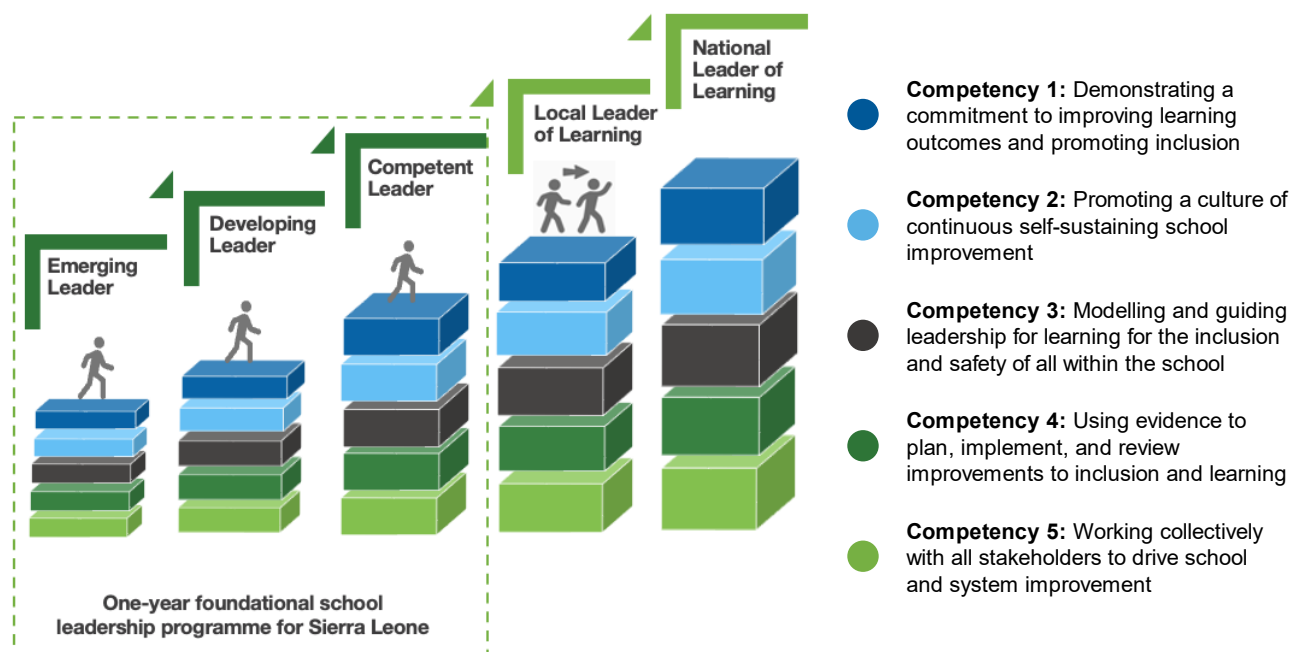
The five competencies and their associated sub-competencies will be developed over time through a continuum of five leadership levels – Emerging Leader, Developing Leader, Competent Leader, Local Leader of Learning and National Leader of Learning - to ensure the programme meets school leaders where they are in their journey (see Figure 2). For each of these five leadership levels, a statement is provided which describes what may be seen and what evidence is available in the school for each associated sub-competency.

It is proposed that a one-year foundational programme in Sierra Leone would focus on taking school leaders from the minimum “Emerging Leader” to mid-level leader “Competent Leader”.

School leaders will demonstrate and evidence a range of strengths and areas for development in each competence and sub competence. This means they can be operating at different levels across the competences. Throughout the programme, the school leader and Local Leader of Learning (to be discussed in section 4 on delivery) will identify strengths and areas for development and the support required to move to the next level for each competency as part of the reflection and development process.

To support school leaders and the professionals working with the competencies, exemplification of each level of leadership will be produced to support their understanding of what leadership competencies looks like at each level.

Figure 2: Continuum for the competency framework



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Content delivery through toolkits

The content for the school leader programme is explicitly linked to the competency framework and continuum and delivered through five toolkits. The toolkits are practical and easy to use resources for the school leaders. Each toolkit consists of information, tools, and structured activities for school leaders to complete over a specified period as well as opportunities for school leaders to review and reflect on their practice. See Table 1 for the proposed content of each toolkit. Please refer to Annex D for a complete mapping of the toolkits to the five competences and their sub-competences.

Please note that the order in which the toolkits are delivered may vary; however, toolkits 1 and 2 need to be delivered first as they ensure school leaders understand the principles, challenges, and opportunities of school improvement before embarking on it in their own school.

In Sierra Leone, top priorities include foundational learning for all learners and implementation of the new senior secondary education (SSE) curriculum – therefore, the toolkit that will help address these issues can be prioritised.

The expectation is that school leaders will complete all five toolkits as part of the programme.

The toolkits are designed to so that school leaders currently at the Emerging or Developing levels of leadership on the continuum will be able to reach the Competent level on all competences upon completion of the programme (see Figure 2). The toolkits will support those who already demonstrate the Competent Leader competencies to further develop their practice. Competent Leaders can continue their professional journey to the last two levels on the continuum - Local Leaders of Learning and National

Leaders of Learning. These are discussed in Section 4 as they play a key role in delivering the programme.

At NLL and LLL levels of competency leaders will not only demonstrate continuous improvement to their own school, but they will also demonstrate that they are able to provide effective support to leaders of other schools to secure improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.

Table 1: Overview of proposed content for the toolkits

Toolkit 0 Course orientation 0.1 Course overview 0.2 Understanding leadership competencies 0.3 Building a portfolio of evidence 0.4 The moral purpose of school leadership and establishing collective efficacy	Toolkit 2 Leading teaching and learning 2.1 Creating effective relationships for leading and learning 2.2 The elements of effective teaching and learning 2.3 Developing the skills to monitor teaching and learning 2.4 Evaluating teaching and learning 2.5 Linking monitoring and evaluation to continued professional development	Toolkit 4 Curriculum development and learning teams 4.1 Leading curriculum development – 4.2 Foundational learning and SSE curriculum 4.3 Supporting women in leadership Developing a school plan for inclusion
Toolkit 1 Developing leadership skills to improve learning outcomes for all 1.1 The moral purpose of school leadership and establishing collective efficacy 1.2 The elements of effective school leadership 1.3 Leading change and school improvement 1.4 Inclusion awareness 1.5 Overcoming the barriers for groups – aligned to Radical Inclusion Policy 1.6 Supporting girls' learning 1.7 Behaviour management for inclusive learning	Toolkit 3 Community and stakeholder engagement 3.1 Stakeholder engagement - the benefits to and responsibility of school leaders 3.2 Leadership strategies for effective engagement with stakeholders 3.3 Planning to strengthen engagement with stakeholders	Toolkit 5 Leadership for safety and equity 5.1 Understanding the need for safety for all 5.2 Behaviour and conduct which support safety and learning 5.3 Prioritising safety and equity 5.4 Developing a school plan for safety and equity - leadership strategies and stakeholder engagement for safety and equity

Every toolkit contains approximately four or five tools. Each tool is based on a structured and guided activity that school leaders will be expected to complete through their participation in the programme. School leaders will be provided with support as they work through completing the tools and the outcome will involve an activity or action taking place in school with stakeholders which will demonstrate a change or improvement is taking place. This will be evidenced using a range of assessment tools as described in section 5.

The toolkit materials and tools will be contextualised for Sierra Leone and developed ahead of the piloting phase.

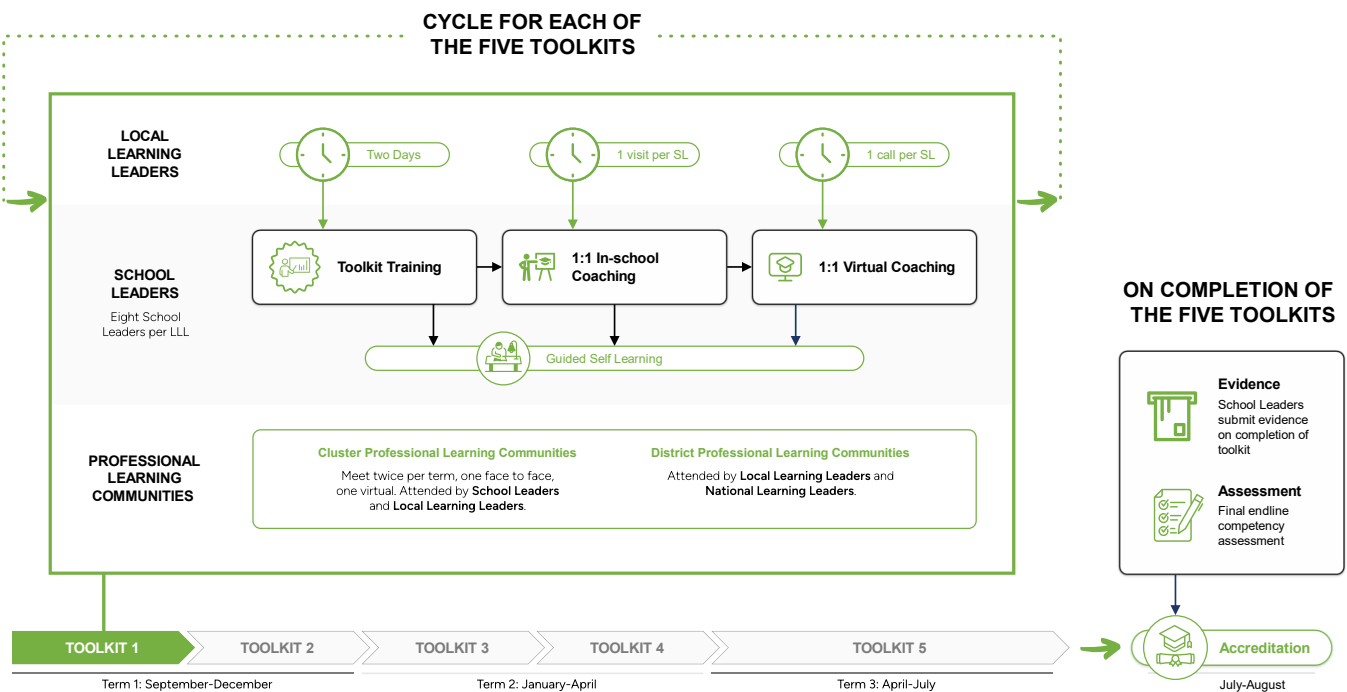
Toolkits will be made available as printed materials and in digitised format to download and access via a device (laptop, tablet, or smartphone) as asynchronous content which can be viewed offline.

4.Delivery Model

4.1. Overview of delivery model components

The delivery model for the programme is based around provision of the five toolkits (described in the previous section) over one school year. Figure 3 shows the overall delivery approach from the selection of school leaders to the selection and training of National Leaders of Learning and Local Leaders of Learning (who will play an instrumental role in delivery of the programme), to the approach for delivering each toolkit (shown across the top of the figure). Each toolkit is composed of a cycle which includes toolkit training, school-based support (in person and virtual coaching) and peer support (professional learning communities). The collection of evidence happens throughout the year but is formally reviewed at midline and at the end of the year as part of the assessment and accreditation processes. The programme components and roles supporting delivery of these are described in detail in the following sections.

Figure 3: Overview of school leadership programme delivery model



4.2. Selection of school leaders

The goal is to have a programme in which all school leaders eventually participate, however, we suggest a phased approach in the initial stages.

In the beginning phases, school leaders should be required to apply for the programme and be selected based on a set of criteria, starting with the pilot.

Selection is based on how well the candidates demonstrate the required level of experience in a leadership post – at deputy or senior leader level - and the motivation and commitment they have demonstrated to bring about change and improvement to learning in their current post. Applications from females in a range of leadership roles will be encouraged. See Table 2 for the list of agreed criteria for school leaders and how they can be evidenced.

School leaders who are due to retire within 3 years of entry to the programme do not fall within the scope of the programme.

Table 2: School leader selection criteria

Criteria	Evidence	Stage of recruitment process
Must hold a leadership role within a school e.g. responsibility for subject/ curriculum area	Letter of application with current role / relevant role	Letter of application
Engagement with PD processes in school	Letter of application response to 'which PD opportunities/ activities have you found particularly helpful in improving your practice?'	Letter of application
Experience of supporting teachers/peers to improve their practice	Letter of application response to 'give a practical example of how you have supported teachers/peers to improve their practice and outline the impact of this on quality of teaching and learning	Letter of application
Commitment to inclusion and creating a safe school environment	Demonstrate awareness how a safe and inclusive learning environment is created in the school and there is evidence that the school leader challenges negative behaviour and attitudes.	Unseen presentation title re inclusion and safety provided
Able to establish positive working relationships	Ability to listen to views of other people Accept range of ideas Build on ideas expressed Disagree positively Use of appropriate non-verbal strategies eye contact, positive body language Use of appropriate verbal communication skills.	Group discussion

The application and selection process for school leaders will follow the two-step process outlined below. This ensures that each participant can be assessed consistently on how well they meet the criteria. It is important that the programme be communicated clearly and widely and advertised well in advance of application deadlines. A communication and advertising plan will need to be developed as part of the pre-implementation development phase (see Section 9).

The two-step process for recruitment will be:

- **Step 1 – Letter of application submitted** against specific headings in the application pack which will be provided in both digital and paper copies. The application will be submitted to the TSC representative at the school leader's district office (to be confirmed). Applications will be reviewed against an agreed marking scheme. It is anticipated that there may be many letters of application to be reviewed and scored. This process can be completed remotely, by district officials (to be confirmed) using the criteria and mark scheme provided, following a pre-briefing. A yes or no recommendation will be made to identify which applicants will progress to the next round of the process referred to as shortlisted candidates.

It is recommended that the name of professional referee is provided by the applicant. This may be an SQAQO, district official, or individual within the system who has worked with the applicant. The referee will be provided with reference form which asks questions relating to openness, attendance and conduct of the applicant. It should, however, be noted that not all referees provide accurate information, and there may be examples where safeguarding concerns arise.

- **Step 2- Short-listed candidates will be invited to attend an assessment day** (expenses paid) for which selection panels will be established per district.

Each selection panel will include a member of the programme team, a nominated representative from the Professional Associations, a nominated representative from the TSC and a District Director. The composition of the panel convened for the Annual teacher Award is a model for this. In addition, for the selection of school leaders, recruited NLLs and LLLs may be involved in the selection panel.

The panel will receive a pre-briefing induction and be provided with an introduction to selection activities, tools, mark schemes and reporting tools to provide feedback.

Each selection activity will assess the candidates' strengths and areas for development against identified criteria. The selection activities will be accessible to and supportive of both female and male applicants.

Sample of selection activities could include:

- pre-prepared presentation on given education topic – time limit given (criteria could include clarity of communication and organisation of ideas; communication skills; ability to engage with audience).
- annotation of a lesson plan (criteria could include recognising positives and giving feedback,
- understanding of lesson structure, content and how a lesson can be improved) or group discussion.

The decision to select a candidate for the programme will be taken through a discussion of scores, recorded after each activity, by individual members of the selection panel and agreeing an average score. One member of the panel will be appointed to complete a summative record form which will be signed, dated and collected by a nominated officer. TSC District Officials will be responsible for notifying all school leaders in their district who applied whether they were selected to participate in the programme.

This selection process will provide rich insights into areas of strength and need for most or all the successful candidates. This information will be used in the development of LLLs and NLLs CPD programme content.

4.3. Delivery of the programme

After the selection of school leaders, delivery of the annual programme cycle will begin. The delivery structure of the programme reflects tried and tested methods of improving the quality of school leadership and is based on principles of effective adult learning⁸, including:

1. Capacity development approach building on existing skills, knowledge and experiences
2. Explicit expectations and outcomes
3. Activity-based, participative and shared learning opportunities
4. Opportunities for individual personal and professional reflection
5. Completion of high-impact, content-related and assessable tasks, embedded in school-place practice
6. A collaborative approach within and beyond formal workshops and communities of learning
7. Alignment with and reinforcing existing accountability/management structures in Sierra Leone
8. Ensuring that all inputs focus on improved learning in the classroom, and that the link with improved learning outcomes is clear and visible

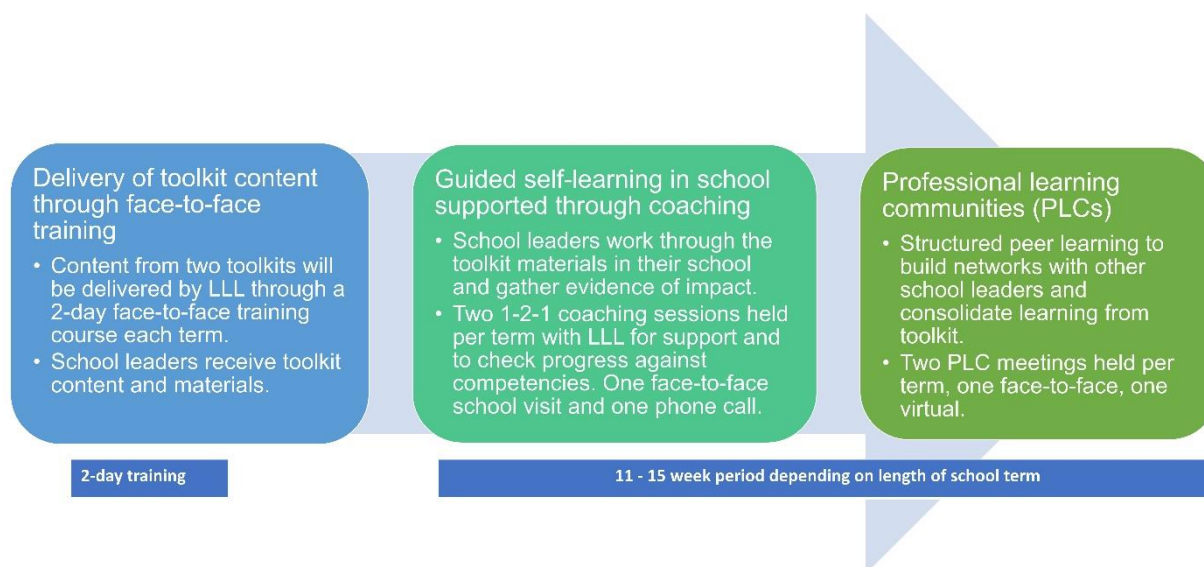
The programme will combine new learning with support through three elements: face-to-face training sessions, the application of learning in the school enabled by individualised coaching by Local Leaders of Learning (LLL) and peer support through professional learning communities (see Figure 4).

- **Face-to-face training with toolkits:** At cluster level is where the Local Leader of Learning (LLL) works with a group of school leaders in their cluster through the content of the toolkits.
- **Guided self-learning in school supported by coaching:** Two guided individual face-to-face sessions between the LLL and school leader take place in school focusing on work-based learning.
- **Professional learning communities (PLCs):** PLCs provide structured peer learning, which can be delivered through existing cluster meetings or termly school leader association meetings to maximise efficiencies.

The school-based and peer support elements of the programme provide important opportunities for participants to reflect, plan, apply, review, and revisit the impact of what they have learned. These elements are essential and ensure that the development and deployment of leadership competencies is a continuous process.

⁸ Merriam, S.B. (2017). Adult learning theory: Evolution and future directions. *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning*, 26, 2017, 21-37.iup.edu; Knowles, M. S., III, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (2012). *The Adult Learner (7th ed.)*. Abingdon-on-Thames, England: Routledge.

Figure 4. Two toolkits each school term accompanied by school-based support and PLCs



The toolkits will be aligned to the school calendar which operates across three terms, each of which consist of a different number of weeks. The 2022/2023 school calendar consists of 15 weeks in the first term, followed by 14 weeks in the second term, and 11 weeks in the third term. The toolkit delivery will be tailored to the school calendar in which it is implemented. Table 3 outlines the timing, activities and estimated school leader commitment required for each toolkit.

Table 3: Toolkit timing, activities and school leader commitment

	Delivery Activities	Estimated school leader level of commitment
Term 1 First eight weeks	Toolkit 0 training: <i>Course orientation</i> Toolkit 1 training: <i>Developing leadership skills to improve learning outcomes for all</i> Guided self-learning 1x face-to-face coaching visit 1x virtual coaching phone call 1x face-to-face PLC	2 days face-to-face (F2F) training 4.5 days working through toolkit materials 0.5 day in-school F2F coaching session with LLL 0.25 days for virtual coaching phone call with LLL 0.75 days for face-to-face PLC (inc. travel if needed) Total: 8 days
Second seven weeks	Toolkit 2 training: <i>Leading teaching and learning</i> Guided self-learning 1x face-to-face coaching visit 1x virtual coaching phone call 1x virtual PLC	2 days face-to-face (F2F) training 3.75 days working through toolkit materials 0.5 day in-school F2F coaching session with LLL 0.25 days for virtual coaching phone call with LLL 0.5 days to attend virtual PLC Total: 7 days

	Delivery Activities	Estimated school leader level of commitment
Term 2 First seven weeks	Toolkit 3 training: Community and stakeholder engagement Guided self-learning 1 x face-to-face coaching visit 1 x virtual coaching phone call 1 x face-to-face PLC	2 days face-to-face (F2F) training 3.5 days working through toolkit materials 0.5 day in-school F2F coaching session with LLL 0.25 days for virtual coaching phone call with LLL 0.75 days for face-to-face PLC (inc. travel if needed) Total: 7 days
Second seven weeks	Toolkit 4 training: Curriculum development and learning teams Guided self-learning 1 x face-to-face coaching visit 1 x virtual coaching phone call 1 x virtual PLC	2 days face-to-face (F2F) training 3.75 days working through toolkit materials 0.5 day in-school F2F coaching session with LLL 0.25 days for virtual coaching phone call with LLL 0.5 days to attend virtual PLC Total: 7 days
Term 3 First six weeks	Toolkit 5 training: Leadership for safety and equity Guided self-learning 1 x face-to-face coaching visit 1 x virtual coaching phone call 1 x face-to-face PLC	2 days face-to-face (F2F) training 3 days working through toolkit materials 0.5 day in-school F2F coaching session with LLL 0.25 days for virtual coaching phone call with LLL 0.75 days for face-to-face PLC (inc. travel if needed) Total: 6.5 days
Second five weeks	1 x face-to-face coaching visit 1 x virtual coaching phone call 1 x virtual PLC Final endline competency assessment + evidence gathering of completion of toolkits	1 day in-school F2F coaching session with LLL (inc. final assessment) 0.25 days for virtual coaching phone call with LLL 0.5 days to attend virtual PLC Total: 1.75 days

The commitment level required by school leaders participating in the programme averages as one day per week, or 37.25 days total. However, as a work-based learning programme, many of the activities are anticipated to take place as part of school leaders' day-to-day duties in their role.

4.4. Local and national leaders of learning

Roles and responsibilities

The delivery approach will harness the education workforce at different levels of the education system to support school leaders in a holistic way. Critical to the delivery of the programme will be the roles of Local Leader of Learning (LLL) and National Leader of Learning (NLL).

Both these roles will be selected from existing school leaders or district officials meeting selection criteria through which they have demonstrated how they have brought about improvements to learning in their schools. In these roles, they will act as change agents to support teaching and learning improvements beyond their own school, offering professional development support to peer school leaders across their cluster.

This delivery model is based on the approach developed as part of education reforms in Rwanda. The Leader of Learning roles form a key part of the Rwanda Basic Education Board's Building Learning Foundations (BLF) programme, a large-scale initiative designed to improve learning outcomes in Mathematics and English across primary grades 1 to 5 across all primary schools delivered by Education Development Trust and partners. The Leaders of Learning in Rwanda play an important role in upskilling peer school leaders in priority school improvement practices. The approach is based on on-the-job learning – working on real issues and problems in context to help develop appropriate, sustainable solutions. As such, they have overseen measurable improvements in the instructional leadership skills of school leaders. For example, in Rwanda important gains in school leader competencies have been demonstrated over time, from 41% of school leaders achieving the competency standards at baseline in February 2018 to 98% having achieved them by March 2021. The model also build capacity to strengthen the whole system in a way which is feasible to implement within the existing cluster structures in Sierra Leone and maximises capacity through PLCs in a way which is most sustainable.

The NLL and LLL roles support a learning system, where professionals are learning at all levels of the education system (Figure 5): LLLs at sector level are supported by NLLs at district level in PLCs; school leaders are supported by LLLs at sector level in PLCs and in turn school leaders support the learning and development of teachers within their own school through communities of practice.

The Steering Committee recognised the benefits and opportunities of adopting a similar model for Sierra Leone including in creating a sustainable education system that engages with continuous support to local leaders, offering a cost-effective model that maximises capacity building through development of peer networks and is based upon determining the professional development needs of school leaders.

Figure 5: System roles where focus on learning and teaching improvements exists at all levels



The responsibilities for each of these roles in enabling the delivery of the programme are outlined below:

Local Leader of Learning responsibilities

The role of Local Leader of Learning (LLL) will:

- deliver all the programme elements to school leaders
- provide ongoing planning, coaching, and mentoring support to enable school leaders to deliver improvements to learning.
- strengthen collaboration and communication between school leaders creating professional learning communities at cluster level.
- monitor progress of school leaders and assess evidence gathered to determine which of the required criteria has been achieved against the competency framework.
- support the school leaders use of formative assessment to reflect on their progress and identify next steps in their development

National Leader of Learning responsibilities

The role of National Leader of Learning (NLL) will:

- act as a key resource for district and national government officials in facilitating the training and ongoing professional development of local leaders of learning (LLL) including facilitation of PLCs for LLLs;
- provide coaching and mentoring support to LLLs;

- access, analyse and disseminate data which identifies areas of good leadership practice and areas where additional support is required.

Typically, one LLL will support eight school leaders and one NLL will support 10 LLLs, however, this is dependent on geographical spread within each district and may vary by region.

The anticipated commitment level required of LLLs to carry out their role in delivering the programme as well as engaging in continuous professional development opportunities of their own is estimated at 85 days per school year (which is just over 2 days per week on average). For NLLs, this is estimated at 23 days per school year (or 0.5 days per week on average). Full details of figures used in this calculation can be found in Annex G.

Selection of National and Local Leaders of Learning

Selection of National and Local Leaders of Learning is based on how well candidates demonstrate the skills and competencies required for effective performance in the roles. The selection criteria have been discussed, developed and agreed with the Steering Committee.

It is proposed that LLLs are recruited from experienced school leaders. NLLs may be recruited from experienced school leaders or alternatively, from district officials with education experience who are able to demonstrate the required criteria. See the Table 4 below for the selection criteria agreed with the Steering Committee. Indicators for measuring the criteria will be determined during the pre-piloting phase.

Table 4: LLL selection criteria

Criteria	Evidence	Stage of recruitment process
Must be qualified school head	Letter of application with current role / relevant role	Letter of application
Must have served as a school leader for minimum of five years	Length of service	Letter of application
Ability to coach others	Applicant is operating at distinguished teacher level	
Commitment to improving learning outcomes and confidence in leading learning	Taken an active role in leading inclusive learning in their schools. Show and share improvements they have made which have resulted in improved/equitable learning for all or identified groups	Presentation – title given
Shown demonstrable impact on learning within their school	School leaders can demonstrate systems and processes in place relating to monitoring and evaluating quality of teaching and learning, and plans for improvement.	Unseen presentation title re systems and processes to improve quality of teaching and learning

Criteria	Evidence	Stage of recruitment process
Able to establish positive working relationships	School leaders can show how they have established and maintained relationships through open communication with all stake holder groups or demonstrate examples where they have overcome challenges to ensure positive working relationships.	Skills demonstrated in seen and unseen presentations Panel question – probe - demonstrate examples where they have overcome challenges to ensure positive working relationships.
Commitment to coaching, development and supporting others	Can describe a developmental approach to coaching – (non-directive, non-authoritarian, non-judgmental) and give an example of how they have used this approach with a member of staff/ colleague.	Panel question – probe understanding of coaching – value and impact
Commitment to inclusion and safe school environment	School leaders demonstrate awareness how a safe and inclusive learning environment is created in the school and there is evidence that the school leader challenges negative behaviour and attitudes.	Group discussion – title How to create a safe and inclusive learning environment. Range of views expressed Ability to listen to views of other people Accept range of ideas Build on ideas expressed Disagree positively Use of appropriate non-verbal strategies eye contact, positive body language Use of appropriate verbal communication skills.



Special consideration: Qualified females will be encouraged to apply. Adapted selection criteria may be used to encourage greater representation of female LLLs i.e., reduced years of experience.

In addition to the criteria for LLLs above, NLLs will also be required to demonstrate additional criteria (see Table 5).

Table 5: NLL selection criteria

Criteria	Evidence
Additional experience through having served as a school leader for more than five years.	Length of service
Experience working at district or national level.	Evidence of having supported school leaders on the implementation of new education policies in Sierra Leone

The application and selection process for NLLs, LLLs and school leaders will follow the same two-step process as outlined in the selection of school leaders, section 4.2. This ensures each participant can be assessed on how well they meet the criteria.

While the recruitment process will be the same for all roles, it will happen at different times and different stakeholders may be involved in the recruitment of NLLs and LLLs compared to the recruitment for school leaders. It is proposed that NLLs and LLLs will be recruited first, such that, once recruited, they can form part of the selection panels for school leader assessment days.

Capacity building and professional development for NLLs and LLLs

In recognition of the importance of the NLL and LLL roles to support delivery of the programme, they will receive training and continuing professional development throughout the programme.

Pre-delivery training

Capacity building will be provided for LLLs and NLLs through a 3-day pre-implementation induction training programme which will focus on developing effective coaching and mentoring practices, recognising what constitutes effective teaching and learning, conducting peer observations with school leaders identifying positive classroom practice, setting objectives for improvement, and delivering effective, developmental feedback.

In-programme continuous development

In addition, LLLs and NLLs will have three further training inputs to support the embedding of the above skills and competencies throughout the delivery period – it is proposed these will each be a further 2 days of training. LLLs will form professional learning communities facilitated by NLLs, to share best practice, gather insights and create relevant solutions to local education challenges. NLLs will also provide virtual coaching support to LLLs to jointly review against the competencies, discuss challenges and identify areas for development.

Further career development pathways

There will be opportunities for school leaders who reach the appropriate level of competency to apply for LLL posts, and for LLLs to apply for NLL posts, further strengthening the Sierra Leone system and creating greater capacity throughout.

Following the pilot year, the LLLs and NLLs will act as coach/mentors for those newly recruited to these roles and co-facilitate induction and follow-on professional development opportunities. NLLs will play a prominent role in supporting the ongoing delivery of training to LLLs.

4.5. Recommendations for use of technology

The use of technology in the delivery, assessment and evaluation of the programme has been considered through the co-design process, both in terms of using a tech-only approach versus face-to-face or using a blended approach:

- The **tech-only approach** (online approach) is appreciated because of the capability to capture and manage data including collecting real time data, improved efficiency to analyse data, automated feedback, and data safety. Limitations to a tech-only approach include lack of devices, lack of electricity, capabilities among school leaders to use technology, and limited internet connectivity in some areas.
- The **face-to-face approach** is appreciated because of its capability to maximise the human elements of the programme including sharing experience, enhanced interaction among school leaders, improved data accuracy, and meeting coach physically in school context. Limitations to the face-to-face approach include high cost, time consuming, and potential inequity between rural and urban areas given rural areas are typically more difficult to access.
- A **blended approach** is recommended by the Steering Committee for the purpose of balancing limitations from the tech and face-to-face only approaches. The blended approach gives immediate feedback, offers timely clarifications to course participants, and can improve equity by adapting to the needs of different areas. For example, where connectivity is limited, the programme elements may be delivered face to face, and as outlined in section 4.6, where it is not possible for female participants to travel to access the programme, the delivery can be flexed to reach them in their community or school where they will be prioritised to receive a device.

For Sierra Leone, while technological capabilities will vary widely across and within districts, it is recommended that a blended approach, including both face-to-face and remote delivery models, is included in the design. The role of technology and associated considerations for each component in the programme are outlined in Table 6.

Box 1: Benefits of a blended approach as shared from the BLF programme in Rwanda

In Rwanda, a blended approach was used to design and implement an accredited course for school leaders at national scale. The blended approach consisted of developing training materials in both print and digital format, designing assessment tools and delivery through both face-to-face and online modes. Three-day face-to-face sessions with university lecturers were complemented by online tasks through the University of Rwanda's e-learning portal. The formative assessment of the course consisted of recording and uploading evidence of completed tasks and the summative assessment involved uploading sets of evidence (portfolios) into the University e-learning portal. The blended course helped to train more school leaders than the face-to-face-only approach would have. The cost of implementation of the blended course decreased significantly because of reduced travel cost for university lecturers. Face-to-face meetings with school leaders were organised for formative and summative assessment. School leaders could attend online synchronous sessions with their lecturers and in addition, online asynchronous activities were organised for headteachers to complete some tasks without lecturers' direct support. the combination of synchronous and asynchronous sessions has resulted into improved school leaders' participation rate compared to face-to-face courses that BLF had implemented before.

Table 6: Considerations of the use of technology

Programme element	Use of technology	Requirements and assumptions
<i>Delivery of training on toolkit content (at cluster level) by LLLs</i>	Delivery of the training will take place face-to-face. Toolkit resources and materials will be uploaded and available to be accessed in digital format as well as printed hard copies where required. Some of the toolkit resources could be completed in the digitised format, i.e., creating a stakeholder engagement plan using the toolkit template.	School leaders in each school will need access to a device and internet connectivity. The cost of data across each programme element has been included in the costs (see Section 8). The digital resources could be shared to participants directly through email, or uploaded onto UNICEF's existing Learning Passport, or another application, and accessed by participants from there. This could be achieved by piloting in schools participating in the One Tablet Per School programme, until access is more widely available, otherwise devices will need to be supplied (to be agreed based on available funding).
<i>Guided self-learning in-school through coaching by LLLs</i>	LLLs will undertake two face-to-face school visits per term, this will be followed up by virtual coaching sessions delivered via phone and	Both school leaders and LLLs will need access to phones supporting calling and messaging and the data to use them.

Programme element	Use of technology	Requirements and assumptions
	ongoing interaction and support via messaging i.e., through WhatsApp.	
<i>Professional learning communities</i>	One PLC per term will be delivered virtually through an available online platform (such as Zoom, WebEx etc). A WhatsApp group can be established for co-ordination and sharing of agenda and notes. One PLC will be delivered in person.	School leaders and LLLs will need access via phone or other device to both group message and access an online conference app, such as Zoom, with sufficient data credits.
<i>Assessment of evidence for accreditation</i>	School leaders can use a tablet or phone to capture and share evidence. Hard copy formats will also be accepted.	School leaders and LLLs will need access to tablet, phone or other device with sufficient memory. The programme will develop a prototype for an online platform/mobile app on which school leaders can upload and submit their evidence. Costs to develop an online platform are included in costing model.
<i>LLL training and coaching delivered by NLLs & programme staff</i>	Training materials and resources will be available in digital format as well as hard copies where required. Phones or other devices that can access the internet will be used for virtual coaching and PLCs.	NLLs and LLLs will need to have access to a device with sufficient memory and data.
<i>MEL</i>	The evaluation survey tools will be provided in digital formats as well as hard copies where required. The competency framework assessment tool will be available as an excel tool.	Enumerator teams who will be collecting data will need devices that can access online versions of the survey tools. LLLs will need access to a tablet or computer in order to use the excel version of the competency framework assessment tool as part of monitoring and coaching sessions with school leaders.



Special consideration: Access to tech devices and data bundles will be prioritised for female leaders to ensure access to coaching and mentoring.

4.6. Supporting women in school leadership positions

Recent evidence shows that having more women in school leadership can lead to improved efficiency of the education system contributing to improved outcomes.⁹ Research also suggests that female school leaders can create a safer, more positive learning environment for adolescent girls.¹⁰ Findings from the TALIS 2008 survey also suggest that female school leaders were more likely than males to report higher levels of instructional leadership, such as supporting teachers to collaborate, motivating teachers to improve their skills and making teachers feel responsible for student's learning.¹¹

In the Sierra Leone co-design, the Steering Committee identified support for women leaders as an area of critical need and significant interest. Throughout the process, discussions have been held to identify challenges for women in leadership positions. Clear ambitions have been expressed to ensure that this programme is designed in such a way as to explicitly address these.

Further, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act was enacted in November 2022 and aims to address significant gender imbalances throughout the country by mandating equal pay for equal work, longer maternity leave, financial inclusion, and a 30% quota of women in government appointments and private institutions with more than 25 employees. In line with this new legislation, this programme will aim to support the MBBSE and TSC in reaching the quota for female school leaders.

The core areas of support for women in leadership can be categorised in the following areas: attitudes, ambition, access and application. Within each area the Steering Committee explored strategies in which these challenges could be addressed (see Table 7 below).

Table 7: Areas and strategies for supporting women in leadership

Challenges		Strategies
Attitude	There are cultural and societal challenges across established systems and processes and in the expectations of communities and teachers towards girls and women.	→ National policies relating to women leaders and aspiring women leaders need to establish clear expectations and set quotas for increasing the number of women leaders. These need to be communicated clearly to all stakeholders. → The programme will align with national expectations and aim to promote positive attitudes toward women in leadership by all involved in the programme.

⁹ UNICEF. (2022). *Increasing Women's Representation in School Leadership: A Promising Path Toward Improving Learning*, Available from: <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/1399-increasing-womens-representation-in-school-leadership-a-promising-path-towards-improving-learning.html>

¹⁰ Education Development Trust (2020) Women's Barriers to Educational Leadership in Ethiopia: Background Report and Recommendations for Target.

¹¹ OECD. (2020). TALIS 2018 results (Volume II): Teachers and school leaders as valued professionals. <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/19cf08df-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/19cf08df-e>

Challenges	Strategies
Ambition Women are currently under-represented and under supported in leadership roles. As a result, they may be deterred from applying for promotion to more senior roles and lack the visibility and influence of female role models.	→ The recruitment process for the programme should recognise and mitigate gender bias by developing and applying criteria and competency-based application and selection processes. → The application process should be designed so women are aware of and recognise potential opportunities and feel supported to apply.
Access We recognise that many women working as educators are also fulfilling domestic roles and responsibilities which may limit their access to professional development opportunities outside of regular working hours. We are aware that these additional responsibilities may limit the locations where female leaders choose to work. We recognise that travel to and from training venues may pose a safety risk for women.	→ The programme will discount gaps in employment for women leaders due to domestic responsibilities. → The programme will aim to accommodate women school leaders in delivering the programme in an accessible location and/or prioritising them for provision of devices and data so they can easily access the programme.
Application We are aware that women in or aspiring to secure leadership roles often face challenging attitudes and behaviours from colleagues and stakeholders, often in their working environment as well as in the wider community. This serves to add additional layers of challenge to an already challenging role and can result in women feeling less confident in carrying out their roles. This is used as evidence to confirm biased or stereotypical beliefs that women cannot be successful education/school leaders.	→ The programme content and approach (toolkits and coaching) will embed behaviour change methodology to support fighting gender bias/ stereotyping. → Female mentors and role models can provide support to participants and female-only PLCs can provide safe spaces to identify issues and solutions. → The programme will monitor whether women report they are supported to perform their role effectively and if the number of women reporting this increases over time.

Based on these strategies, the programme will be designed to support the ambition of the MBSSE, TSC and the Steering Committee to significantly increase the number of female school leaders in all phases of education and ensure they are supported.

In order to deliver on this ambition, it has been agreed that the Sierra Leone School Leadership Programme will:

- Prioritise the recruitment of female school leaders (including deputies) from pre-primary and primary schools.
- Aim for the difference in number between male and female leaders selected to be no more than 10%, taking into account the number of existing female school heads at each level.
- Reflect positively on, or discount, breaks in service of female teachers/leaders due to child rearing when applying the selection criteria.
- Provide additional coaching/mentoring support to female leaders in either individual or group settings. This will also support the application of women leaders to NLL and LLL posts.

These additional supports have been included in the programme costs (see section 8).

4.7. Alignment with other system elements

As part of the programme design, conversations were held with key system actors and initiatives to ensure alignment between the goals of the school leadership programme and other efforts in the education sector that will impact its delivery and success. See Table 8 for a list of initiatives and considerations moving forward. During the pre-implementation development phase (see Section 9), it will be key to continue these discussions to coordinate and agree on key decisions affecting the school leadership programme.

Table 8: Education system elements and initiatives that will affect the school leadership programme

System element or initiative	Considerations
School Quality Assurance (MBSSE)	We recommend that SQAOs be invited to participate in all the formal training components (including training for NLLs/LLs as well as the toolkit delivery) as they will need to understand the expectations and requirements of the programme. Ideally, on school visits SQAOs would discuss the impact of the programme with school leaders and collect evidence of improvements. The current SQA system is under review and new SQA tools are being developed, so it is key to ensure the SQA department is aware of the school leadership programme expectations and activities.
Radical Inclusion policy (MBSSE)	The competency framework has been mapped to the Radical Inclusion policy; however, it will be key to align toolkit content and MEL with the Radical Inclusion implementation plan and key performance indicators (KPIs).
Teacher CPD Framework (TSC)	The TSC is currently developing a new Teacher Continuous Professional Development Framework. Once this Framework has been agreed, school leaders in the programme will need to be familiar with the content and approach to help support teachers.
One Tablet Per School (MBSSE)	The aim of One Tablet Per School is to provide every government and government-assisted school with a tablet to improve school management and administration. A core component of the programme focuses on collecting dynamic school-level data, including teacher background information, enrolment and attendance for teachers and

System element or initiative	Considerations
	students. The school leadership programme is considering piloting in schools taking part in the One Tablet Per School programme to support use of a blended approach to delivery. This would ensure school leaders have access to a device and internet as well as to a basic set of school-level data.
TEACH & COACH Pilot (World Bank)	The TEACH/COACH programme aims to empower school leaders to undertake informed lessons observations and to provide the materials and tools to do so. A small pilot has just started and will be scaled up in 5 districts where the One Tablet Per School is also being implemented. TEACH/COACH will directly feed into the teacher CPD programme. The existing tool being used in the teacher CPD programme is an adaptation of TEACH. The content of the school leader programme toolkits will need to align with the teacher CPD programme aspects of this programme. The programme should consider using data collected through TEACH/COACH if possible.
Sierra Leone Education Innovation Challenge (MBSSE)	The Sierra Leone Education Innovation Challenge (SLEIC) is being delivered by five service providers, each responsible for a specific geographical area and number of schools. Each service provider has their own approach to school improvement and student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy. Equally, each provider has their own approach to supporting school leadership (or not). EducAid's programme, for example, has a strong focus on support to school leadership competences, with an emphasis on taking responsibility for the ethos and relationships within the school community as a foundation for all other learning (literacy, numeracy included). Depending on the pilot location, the school leadership programme will need to coordinate with SLEIC programme schools to ensure alignment of school leader support and understanding of the competency framework.
Leh Wi Lan (MBSSE)	The school leadership programme design team had ongoing conversations with Leh Wi Lan throughout the design process to ensure learning and alignment with what has been done through the LWL programme, especially those activities and trainings involving school leaders.

5. Assessment

We know from research and best practice in continuous professional development (CPD) that when participants are supported to self-reflect and are actively engaged in the CPD process, that the positive, measurable impact of the CPD is increased.

These practices and processes are embedded in the proposed assessment model, which captures the professional learning of the school leader and the changes in school practices, as set out in the toolkits aligned with the expectations in the competency framework and continuum.

5.1. Principles of the assessment for school leaders

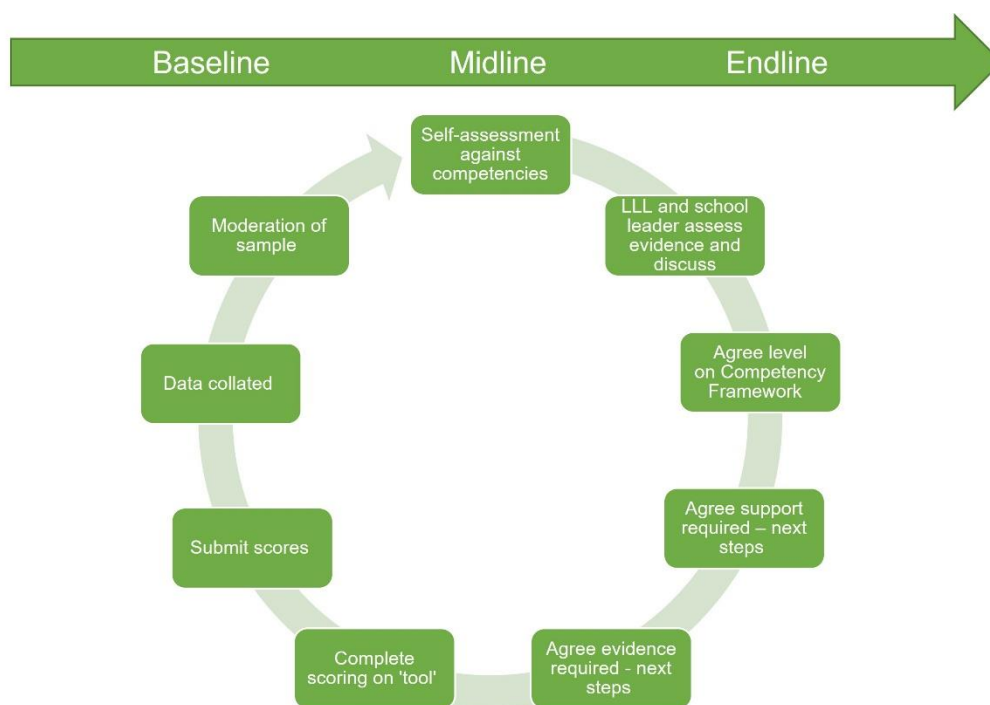
The Steering Committee discussed strategies for measuring, monitoring and evaluating school leaders' progression through the programme and agreed on an assessment model in which:

- The measure of success will focus on the evidence of impact of the school leaders' role in their school. This is not just what school leaders need to know but how to apply and embed their knowledge to achieve impact and improvements in their school.
- Training content delivered through the toolkits will set clear expectations of what leaders need to do to evidence they are meeting the competencies. Support is provided in the toolkits and the tools within them as to the outcome and evidence for each tool.
- School leaders will self-assess, and in regular professional dialogue with the LLL during school visits, will agree on the evidence to be submitted. In addition, LLLs will provide examples of evidence in the PLC meetings.
- Information recorded will be used to capture self-assessment/formative and summative assessment data.
- Coaching support by LLLs to school leaders will provide opportunities to discuss the assessment criteria and ensure understanding of what activities are to be completed to contribute to the evidence recorded for assessment.
- School leaders will be supported in gathering the required evidence, and tools to support data collection and analysis will be included in the toolkit content.
- Toolkit activities will provide scaffolding to ensure that school leaders reach the expected competencies. As the competencies are matched to the Sierra Leone standards and expectations, the school leaders will be able to fulfil the instructional leadership expectations of their roles.

5.2. Assessment process against competencies based on evidence gathered

The assessment process is designed to produce rigorous data through a robust, objective process of professional judgement based on evidence provided by school leaders.

Figure 5. Overview of school leader assessment model



Assessment of each school leader by the Local Leader of Learning (LLL) will take place during programme implementation at three points – baseline, midline and endline (see Figure 5).

The LLL who supports the school leader will act as an objective assessor, making judgements about each school leader’s competencies. At each assessment point, school leaders and assessors discuss and evaluate school leaders’ leadership competencies against the competency framework. They select one statement relating to the level of leadership which they consider to be the ‘best fit’ for each sub-competency.

To support judgement, school leaders provide evidence they have collated (online or hard copy). A wide range of sources of evidence are reviewed and considered when making a judgement, for example, conversations with school leader, with other stakeholders, photographs, meetings minutes and agendas, documents related to teaching and learning, school plans, pupil attainment / assessment tests, lesson observation and feedback reports, coaching sessions, etc.

At each assessment point, a leadership level for each competency and areas for development is agreed and recorded for each school leader.

The data collected by the competency framework tool from the school leaders in the programme is compared to qualitative and quantitative data collected on change in leadership through other sources (impact evaluation surveys and stakeholder interviews) by the programme team as part of MEL.

The evidence gathered for assessment will be regularly reviewed as part of school-based learning and in addition will be submitted for externally assessed and moderated evaluation at the end of the programme (details to be determined as part of accreditation process).

Evaluation and assessment tools and formats will be accessed, completed, and submitted using available technology (see Table 6 in section 4.5). In the absence of technology or connectivity, paper formats will be used.

Importantly, the data collected at baseline and midline can be used to provide evidence of intermediate outcomes and identify any problems with either programme delivery or the assessment process itself.

If possible, existing systems and processes for monitoring school improvement in Sierra Leone should be aligned with the assessment model, and school leaders should have access to the data collected as part of these processes to help evidence their own progress. Examples of data include:

- The School Quality Assurance system (through School Quality Assurance Officer school visits) collects data at the primary and secondary levels primarily on lesson observations, school quality and attendance. New school quality assurance tools are being developed and will need to be aligned with the school leader competency framework.
- MBSSE and TSC use data from student EGRA and EGMA assessments.
- Relevant Directors from across MBSSE and TSC (Directors of Teacher Development and Performance, Teacher Management and Planning and Policy, for example) collect data on CPD for school leaders and their expected qualifications.
- School leaders are responsible for school improvement plans, and SQAOs ensure that these plans are used to assess school quality.
- The annual school census report should reflect impact of leadership on learning outcomes and school quality based on a new template to be developed by the MBSSE and TSC.

6. Accreditation

This research-based school leadership programme enables candidates to develop practical, professional competence. This is a move away from more traditional or academic training but still requires a suitably well-respected form of recognition or qualification. In some education systems¹², school leaders gain a professional qualification, which is also recognised by universities but is not directly aligned to the traditional postgraduate route. These professional qualifications are valued and respected by professional bodies, governments, higher education institutions or a combination of these institutions.

The desired outcome of the programme is to achieve some form of valuable and incentivising recognition or accreditation for school leaders in Sierra Leone. Various options focusing on how to achieve this have been discussed with stakeholders from the government, the TSC and higher education institutions, including TTIs. While the Steering Committee has yet to decide on its preferred route, the following possibilities remain:

1. A higher education-led approach, where the universities accredit the programme and award school leaders with a professional qualification.
2. An awarding professional body approach, where the TSC takes the lead in awarding successful candidates a professional licence. This approach may include a system of licence renewal every few years.

A further option involves collaborating with the African Union (AU) associated Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) accreditation system. The AU is pioneering a continental approach to raising teacher and school leader standards by providing individual awards for candidates who successfully complete a test relating to the AU standards. These candidates also prove that they have reached the relevant practical competences in line with their own country's system expectations and requirements. As of current discussions, the proposed division would be the AU test worth 60% of the total marks and the country-based practical element worth 40%.

Some considerations have been explored to support the selection of the most suitable option for Sierra Leone:

- The school leadership programme is designed to enable trainee school leaders to acquire and demonstrate practical competence.
- Therefore, any qualification, licensing or award approach will need to match this approach. For example, a test on theoretical knowledge would not necessarily allow candidates to showcase their learning.
- Any approach that is adopted needs to ensure that there is high value and recognition attached to the qualification, licence or award. This may include material incentives but must certainly include professional rewards, including public recognition of status and further professional development opportunities.

¹² In Rwanda, for example, as part of the Building Learning Foundations programme implemented by Education Development Trust, an accreditation partnership was established with the University of Rwanda – College of Education. Upon completion of the accredited professional development course participants receive a Certificate or Diploma in System Leadership (worth 30 or 60 credits respectively) as a recognised qualification in leadership.

- Successful systems often include a career and qualifications pathway to motivate teachers and school leaders. For example, in Sierra Leone, LLLs and NLLs could achieve a higher-level award and become part of a wider training and development 'eco system' for all school leaders. The competency framework outlined above provides a possible route for this approach.

The Steering Committee is actively exploring these options. Meanwhile, the pilot will be delivered and any decision taken regarding accreditation will be applied to candidates within the pilot.

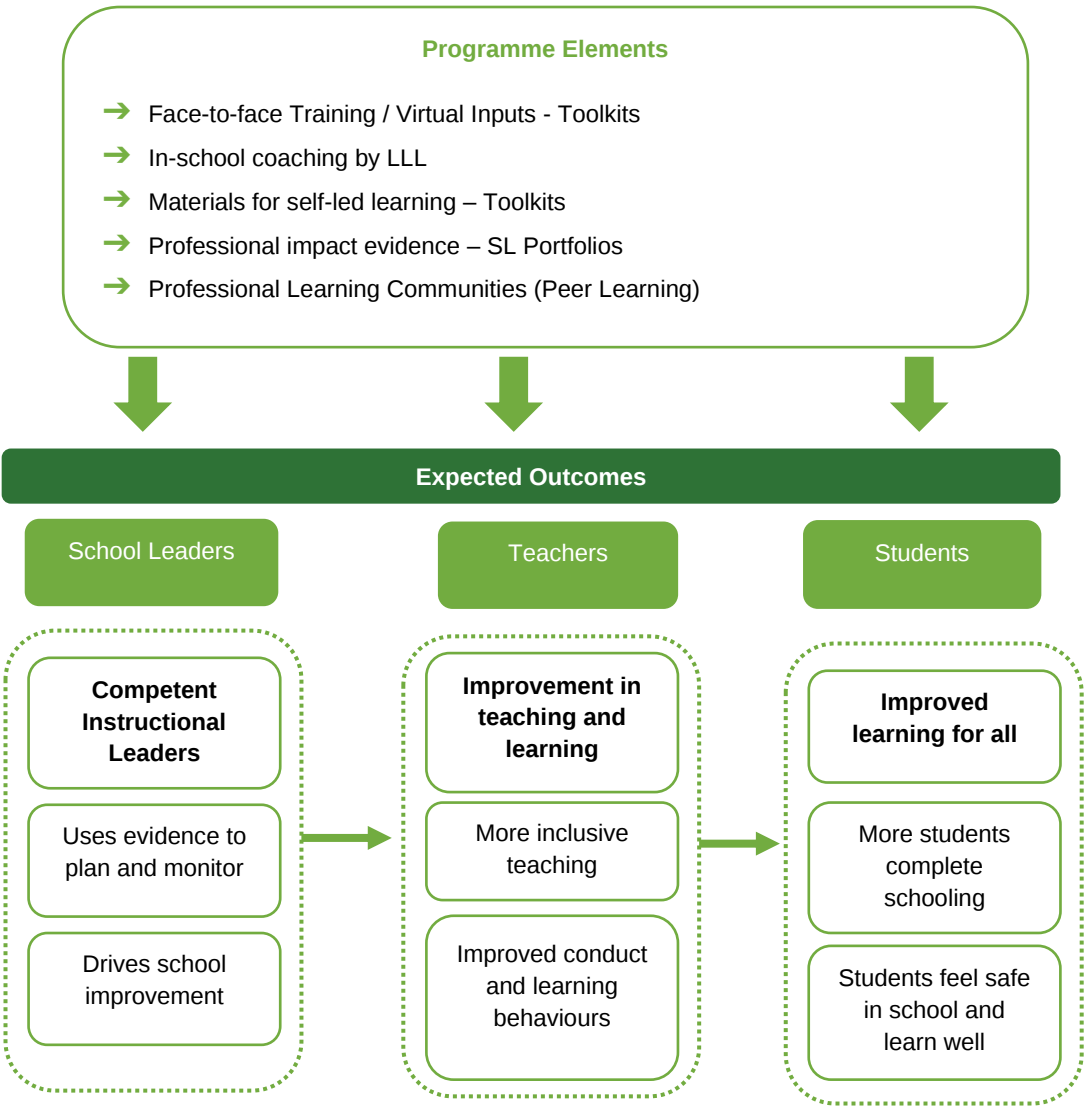
7. Monitoring, evaluation & learning

In the four co-design workshops, some features of the high-level design of the MEL were discussed but will need to be revisited in detail to be agreed as part of the next development phase. Based on previous experience of similar programmes and best practice we are proposing the high-level MEL below for further discussion.

7.1. Proposed theory of change

At school level, the theory of change targets school leaders as direct beneficiaries. Changes in their leadership should lead to changes for indirect beneficiaries (teachers and students). The wider education system also benefits. Figure 6 outlines the Theory of Change including programme elements (inputs) and expected outcomes for each primary beneficiary (school leaders, teachers and students).

Figure 6: Programme Theory of Change



This theory of change shows the logic underpinning the programme. It is focused on the main set of outcomes the programme hopes to achieve when there are in fact, other outcomes to this, e.g., the LLLs and NLLs are trained as coaches/mentors. The focus in this simplified version of theory of change is on emphasising how the programme focuses activity on the school leaders, but with the expectation that it will lead to improved student learning outcomes, which is the ultimate aim.

For each beneficiary, there is an overarching outcome (in bold) and examples below show how that breaks down into more specific outcomes.

The programme elements are not separate as depicted here, but interlinked, e.g., the competencies run through all, and self-led learning is guided by coaches. They are nevertheless the ‘active ingredients’ that we are hoping will lead to the outcomes shown.

In monitoring and evaluation of the programme, we need to not only understand the effectiveness (impact) of the programme, but we also need to understand what has had that effect. Thus, we need to understand implementation – what has been delivered, to who and how.

Evaluation of the programme comprises two main areas of investigation – implementation and impact - each driven by key guiding questions (see Table 9).

Table 9: Guiding questions for evaluation of programme implementation and impact

Implementation	Impact
→ Who are the direct and indirect beneficiaries? Who is delivering the various elements of the programme? → Is the programme reaching the target groups? → Is delivery happening as expected? → What are the barriers and facilitators to delivery? → What factors affect engagement with each element of the programme? → How effective are the different elements of the programme (e.g., Face-to-face training, coaching, PLCs) → Do stakeholders delivering, receive the input they need to deliver to the standard required? → Are impact pathways working as hoped? What evidence is there that change is starting to happen at the system, school, teacher, and student levels? → Are expected intermediate outcomes achieved (is the programme on the right track to achieve the outcomes?) → How do female leaders report that they have been supported during implementation? → Which programme component proved to be the most effective in supporting female leaders and why?	→ What changes do beneficiaries experience as a result of the programme? → To what extent does the programme achieve its intended impact? Under what conditions, and for who, is this achieved? → Is the underlying programme logic (theory of change) supported by evidence? Do the impact pathways work as expected? → Was the support planned for female leaders effective in delivering impact?

These questions will ideally be assessed through impact research and embedded MEL within the programme.

For impact evaluation, data from schools and people in the programme will be collected as well as data from schools and people not in the programme (quasi-experimental research). A 'control' component can be considered as an optional pilot research element in the future.

7.2. Embedded MEL & impact: methodologies

Embedded MEL methodologies within the programme will verify implementation, programme fidelity and achievement of intermediate outcomes. The key functions are:

- Monitoring fidelity of delivery
- Evaluating assumptions, needs/gaps assessment
- Measuring short-term impact and progress against the ToC
- Generating real time data for insights, learning and stakeholder buy-in as well as programme adaptation
- Developing and testing an embedded tool for measuring school leader capacity and change at programme and system level

The data and monitoring tools will be developed to capture and evaluate change in school leader practices as outlined in the competency framework. These include:

- Beneficiary needs surveys (SL, supervisor)
- Monitoring data (participation logs, activity reports)
- Training evaluation feedback
- Focus groups, interviews, and case studies
- School leader competency assessment tools
- Joint Monitoring Visits

Assessment of the school leaders against the competency framework will be the principal impact measure for the programme at baseline, midline and endline. Seventy-five percent of school leaders are expected to reach the optimum level ('competent leader') by the end of the first year.

7.3. Overview of data collection activities & schedule

MEL activities across both areas (implementation and impact) should be carried out in three phases:

- Phase 1: Preparation for implementation (baseline)
Agreeing key performance indicators, establishing baselines and gathering key information prior to starting the programme.

→ Phase 2: Toolkit implementation (midline)

Monitoring implementation and engagement with the three elements (training, coaching / mentoring and peer learning) and with support for female leaders as the toolkits are rolled out to schools.

→ Phase 3: End of implementation and impact measurement (endline)

Gathering and assessing evidence of change through endlines. Processing and understanding the range of impact to inform next stage of programme delivery.

Tables 10, 11 and 12 outline each phase of the MEL process and provide details on the timing, type of data, activities and tools that can be used for each.

Table 10: MEL Phase 1: Preparation for implementation – Baseline

Data type	Activities – who and when?	Tools & Sample
Selection of NLL and LLL and school leaders	Agree and check evidence of selection criteria. Undertaken by district official(s) and reported to selection panel as part of recruitment process.	Selection criteria checklist
Selection and administrative data on schools and stakeholders (School Leaders, LLL, NLL) involved in pilot	Carried out by programme staff prior to start of delivery. To be QA by programme manager and technical lead.	School registration forms
Engagement and training of NLL and LLL	Facilitators to collect training data and share with MEL programme staff. Face-to-face “Train the Trainer” training delivered by programme staff.	Attendance logs Pre and post training surveys Training evaluation forms
Baseline surveys	School leader survey Teacher survey Student survey SMC focus group interview To be carried out by data collection teams before the start of toolkit 1 delivery further outlined in section 7.5 below.	School leader survey (100% of school leaders for pilot, 15% surveyed at scale-up) Teacher survey – Sample of 4 teachers per school Student survey – Sample of 20 students per school Control group
Baseline assessment data on SL competencies	Assessment of all school leaders against the competency framework tool. LLLs carry out assessment of SL baseline competencies at/shortly after first F2F training. Send to programme team	Competency Framework Tool – 100% of school leaders

Table 11: MEL Phase 2: Toolkit implementation – Midline

Data type	Activities – who and when?	Tools & Sample
Engagement and effectiveness of face-to-face training of NLLs, LLLs and SLs	Programme staff at face-to-face training	Attendance logs Pre and post training surveys Training evaluation forms
Engagement & delivery of LLL and SL → LLL to SL delivery → SL and LLL engaging with LLL support	LLL and SL produce & keep records of sessions/activities. Reviewed by SQAOs and JMV teams (tbc)	Follow Up Form for LLLs NLL monitoring visit template Tools administered during JMV: SL survey, FGD guides for SLs + trainers, Portfolio review
Engagement of LLL and SL with PLCs & effectiveness of the meetings	LLL submit record to programme team. Visitors during JMV	PLC record form – evidence of attendance and topics discussed
Joint monitoring visits (JMV) (Stakeholder perspectives on toolkit implementation and effects and evidence of intermediate outcomes)	NLL responsible for the district LLL working with the school District official i.e. SQA Ministry representative? Programme delivery staff Visit sample of schools – carry out FGDs, interviews, evidence and portfolio reviews, survey Each JMV consists of: → ½ day pre-briefing → 2 day school visit → ½ day post-briefing to include write-up of visit report to be uploaded to MEL system.	JMVs: SL survey, FGD guides (LLL, SL, teachers and students), Portfolio review checklist, Document and evidence review checklist, monitoring visit template Typically 2 times per year – sample of 15% of school – (some of the sample to include focus on outliers i.e. those at above/below expected level).
LLL to SL monitoring visits	Continuous assessment of progress against competency framework and toolkit activities.	LLL – SL visit forms
NLL to LLL monitoring visits (as part of	Verification of programme delivery by LLL Verifying evidence of impact gathered by school leader as part of assessment.	NLL – LLL visit forms All school leaders, LLLs and NLLs

Data type	Activities – who and when?	Tools & Sample
	As part of facilitating LLL PLCs – review of challenges and opportunities.	
Midline SL competencies data	LLL carry out assessment of SL midline competencies LLL send to programme team	Competency Framework Tool – 100% of school leaders.

Table 12: MEL Phase 3: End of implementation and impact measurement – Endline

Data type	Activities – who and when?	Tools & Sample
<i>Endline surveys</i> <i>Exam grades data</i>	School leader survey Teacher survey Student survey SMC focus group interview Carried out by data collection team following the end of programme delivery.	School leader survey (100% of school leaders for pilot, 15% of school leaders surveyed at scale-up) Teacher survey – Sample of 4 teachers per school Student survey – Sample of 20 students per school Control group
<i>Endline assessment data on SL competencies (end of pilot)</i>	Assessment of all school leaders against the competency framework tool. LLLs carry out assessment of SL endline competencies after 10 th month of the programme. Send to programme team	Competency Framework Tool 100% of school leaders
<i>Joint monitoring visits (JMV)</i>	NLL responsible for the district LLL working with the school District official i.e. SQAQO Ministry representative? Programme delivery staff Visit sample of schools - carry out FGDs, interviews, evidence and portfolio reviews, survey Each JMV consists of: → ½ day pre-briefing → 2 day school visit → ½ day post-briefing to include write-up of visit report to be uploaded to MEL system	Typically 2 times per year – sample of 15% of school – (some of the sample to include focus on outliers i.e. those at above/below expected level)
<i>Other evidence of change</i>	LLLs collect endline impact (case) studies from SLs	Impact (case) study template

7.4. Data collection tools and processes

The data collection tools used in this programme will help to understand the skills and competencies of school leaders (i.e., the presence or development of leadership skills), effective teaching, perceptions of the school community and student engagement.

Baseline and endline impact surveys

In the programme, school leader, teacher and student surveys will be created based on the conceptual frameworks of effective leadership underpinning all the programme content, from toolkits to competency frameworks. They will be designed to collect data pertaining closely to the intended areas of impact in a methodologically rigorous way. The surveys will be designed to allow for exploratory analysis of contextual factors that may influence programme delivery and impact. Baseline and endline data will be considered to:

- Establish baseline / endline data for the school leadership training programme
- Identify weakness and strengths of the current school leadership practices
- Assess students, teachers' and SMC insights on current school leadership practices.

Table 13 describes the research tools and sampling for the baseline and endline surveys.

Table 13: Impact tools

Data collection tool	Description	Administration	Sample*
School leader survey	The survey focusses on understanding school leaders' confidence, knowledge, skills, priorities, practice, and professional development needs at the start and end of the pilot project.	Mobile-phones preferred (but paper-based as back-up method)	100% of schools/SLs 1 SL from each school (total of 80) +40 from control schools
Teacher survey	The survey focuses on professional development, and changes in the school (endline). It also triangulates data from the school leader questionnaire by capturing data from teachers on school policy and practice.	Mobile-phones preferred (but paper-based as back-up method)	4 experienced teachers from each school - one from each grade should be included (total of 320 teachers) +160 from control schools
Student survey	This survey triangulates data from the school leaders' and teachers' questionnaire by collecting data from students on school policies, their sense of well-being and safety in school, their experiences, their perceptions of learning and of equity / inclusion issues.	Paper-based survey form	20 students per school (total of 1,600)+800 from control schools

Data collection tool	Description	Administration	Sample*
SMC focus group interview	Structured focus group discussions with members of the SMC	FGDs	20 SMC FGDs +10 SMC FGDs from control schools

**All four of the above data collection tools will include the 80 pilot schools and 40 control schools.*

Data collection processes involve:

- All schools in the pilot project will be involved in baseline and endline impact surveys.
- Data collection for baseline will take place during Phase 1.
- Follow-up collection (endline) near the end of the pilot project delivery.
- The primary method of data collection will be through surveys, tailored for each of the relevant stakeholder groups. Both paper-based and electronic methods of data collection will be used, with all data being input into data software (to be decided).
- Questionnaires will be distributed to respondents and then enumerators will collect all the completed questionnaires, cross checking all validation and skipping rules. At the end of the data collection, all questionnaires will be encoded onto a data software/platform (to be decided).

Joint monitoring visits

Joint Monitoring Visits will provide qualitative data to explain when how and why changes occur for school leaders and their schools and engage stakeholders directly in observing and measuring that impact/change.

This programme will employ a system of in-person monitoring visits to schools, which will be carried out by a team of key stakeholders, including LLLs, NLLs, SQAO and programme delivery staff. The visits serve to:

- Collect a wide range of evidence using the monitoring tools
- Monitor implementation and observe changes in person
- Carry out reviews of school leader portfolios
- Provide support to beneficiaries
- Validate the programme model with key stakeholders

In the pilot programme, we propose two rounds of JMV. These will be carried out for a sample of 12 schools at each round.

- JMV visits at round 1 (Phase 2), 12 schools will be included.
- JMV visits at round 2 (Phase 3), 12 schools should be included. These should be made up of 50% of the same schools as in round 1, and 50% of new schools in round 2.

The data collection processes for JMV's involve:

- 15% of schools (12 schools) in the pilot will receive two rounds of joint monitoring visits during Phase 2 and in Phase 3.
- The primary method of data collection will be through focus group discussions, surveys, and portfolio/document reviews.
- There should be a minimum of 3 people in the data collection team, who will conduct the visits, and collate the responses onto a recording form, which will then be uploaded to a MEL software system.

Table 14 describes each JMV data collection tool.

Table 14: Joint monitoring visit data collection tools

Data collection tool	Description
Focus group discussions	Structured focus group discussions with School Leaders, LLL, and SQAQ as present. Some visits may also include focus group discussions with students, teachers, and PTSA members.
School Leader questionnaires	School Leaders receive a survey asking to what extent their expectations have been met regarding different aspects of the programme and its implementation.
Documentation and portfolio reviews	Status of documentation and collection of evidence in portfolios by Monitoring Visit Teams reviewed & quantified against checklist.
Stakeholder surveys	Surveys completed by regional/ district representatives.

Competency Framework Assessments

Assessment of the school leaders on the competency framework will be the principal impact measure for the programme at baseline, midline and endline. All school leaders will be assessed. Seventy-five percent of school leaders are expected to reach the optimum level ('competent leader') by the end of the first year. The competency framework assessments will be supported by impact surveys in order to triangulate findings between teachers, school leaders and students in the school, and allow for comparison with the control schools. Triangulation of data from different sources (teacher, student and school leader) will be valuable for both data reliability and for providing a complete picture of the school context.

Assessment data will be collected at Phase 1 (baseline), Phase 2 (midline) and Phase 3 (endline). The competency framework assessment tool will be made available as an Excel spreadsheet tool that incorporates a related scoring system, which will provide valuable data for the assessment process. A paper-based version will also be available where required.

Data collection teams and training

We propose the establishment of a central MEL function within the programme team led by a MEL manager who leads the data collection of the programme (as outlined in the roles in section 9.5). Survey administration is carried out by hired enumerators, who would be supported regionally by programme staff members. Programme staff members should oversee the data collection from a selection of schools (both pilot and control) to ensure data collectors (enumerators and JMV teams) are adhering to data collection processes.

For baseline and endline impact data collection, there should be:

- Data collection teams should consist of two people (enumerators).
- Each team will visit one school per day. Allow 160 days of capacity.
- The composition of teams needs to be sensitive to the local context in terms of gender and language, as well as local knowledge of the survey area.
- They will require 0.5 day for orientation on survey and data collection protocols.
- There should also be a budget allowed for 'additional data on devices' - if collecting data on mobile phones.
- An additional budget needs be considered for the following (where required):
 - Tool development
 - Translation
 - Printing
 - Survey administration
 - Data input / transposition

Data collection through joint monitoring visits, includes:

- 15% of schools (12 schools) will be monitored across two rounds, at Phase 2 and Phase 3 = total of 24 JMV visits
- JMV teams consist of a minimum of 3 people. They should ideally be made up of programme members, a local education official and a national representative.
- The assumption is that the representatives of the JMV team will have prior knowledge and experience of the programme.
- However, if inspectors are used to form the JMV team, then they will need training on the programme = total of 2 days
- Each team will visit 1 – 2 schools per day, depending on geographical proximity.
- JMV teams will require 0.5 day orientation on the visit and data collection protocols.
- Budget will need to account for 1 day for organising and liaison with schools by the regional team.
- Budget will need to consider a minimum of 1 week in total for reporting for all schools.

Evidence reporting

Evidence collected through the different methodologies will go through robust analysis and reporting on different timeframes.

Embedded MEL	Impact research
→ Data will be collected and reported on an on-going basis through reports, presentations, and workshops. → Findings will be shared with and validated by stakeholders in the consortium, Ministry and funder. → Findings inform the work of the programme teams and external consultants, e.g. revision of content, planning for additional support for SLs, LLLs and NLLs.	→ Findings from baseline data will be reported → Findings from endline data will be reported

8. Costing

8.1. Overview

To support the design and implementation of the school leadership programme in Sierra Leone, a costing model has been developed in as a separate set of excel workbooks (see 'Sierra Leone School Leadership Programme: Costing Model'). This modelling has the benefit of ensuring a focus on costs and sustainability as bringing in costing during the design can help keep discussions realistic and focused on the practical considerations that make up the biggest drivers of cost. After the design phase, the key intended use of the costing model is to support future planning for piloting and scale-up.

The costing model follows an ingredient-based costing framework, disaggregating the activities that make up the programme into the smallest sensible ingredients, and distinguishing between fixed and variable costs and those which are based on personnel time or other inputs. This can then allow for an idea of which costs will be borne, and when, and help to understand the economies of scale arising from larger implementation. The costing model brings in unit cost data from a range of sources, including previously implemented programmes.

The costing model is intended to be flexible, to reflect not only the programme design described elsewhere in this report, but also to show what changes to this design and scope could look like and how these might affect the costs. As such, certain choices can be flexibly altered by the user.

The costing model is organised into five headline activity categories:

- Strategy: High-level strategic planning, programme management and comms
- Content: Competency Framework, Course Modules and Content Development
- Accreditation: Including TSC and AFTRA accreditation routes
- Delivery: Including trainings, coaching and blended-tech options
- MEL: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning including surveys and joint monitoring visits

The costing model focuses on the **additional cost of these activities**. Where these activities can be done using existing roles (e.g., by TSC staff in their existing duties), or using existing facilities (e.g., using school buildings free of cost), these activities are shown at zero cost.

Related to this, there is the option for overall programme management staff to be costed in the 'strategy' tab. There are then choices later for specific activities to be done by 'additional' consultants, or 'existing' project or TSC staff at zero additional cost.

Finally, the Sierra Leone currency underwent a redenomination process during this programme design, where 10,000 Old Leones became 10 New Leones. Many of the unit costs, drawn from examples of similar programming, were in Old Leones and so the model was developed using Old Leones as the basis, but the outputs can be shown in New Leones, Old Leones, GBP and USD.

8.2. User Guide

The costing model has been developed as a set of Excel workbooks and each is separated into 10 tabs. Not all of these will need to be used by all users, and the cells that are flexible to change are colour coded. Table 15 summarises these tabs.

Table 15: Summary of costing model tabs

Tab	Used by	Explanation
User Guide	For reference	Guidance on how to use this costing model
Overview	For all users	Shows the headline costs of the programme, and options for key programme-wide inputs, such as the currency to display costs in throughout
Strategy	For all users	Looks in detail at the 'strategy' related costs, and specific strategy-focused inputs, such as how many steering committee meetings per year.
Content	For all users	Looks in detail at the 'content' related costs, and specific content-focused inputs, such as the number of toolkits.
Accreditation	For all users	Looks in detail at the 'accreditation' related costs, and specific accreditation-focused inputs, such as whether this is done with TSC, AU or both.
Delivery	For all users	Looks in detail at the 'delivery' related costs, and specific delivery-focused inputs, such as how many school leaders are targeted each year.
MEL	For all users	Looks in detail at the 'MEL' (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning) related costs, and specific MEL-focused inputs, such as the number of school leaders surveyed.
Targeting	For reference	This shows information related to the number of school leaders that might wish to be targeted, to support the choices in the 'delivery' tab.
Unit costs	For advanced users	This contains the unit costs for specific items such as the costs of location hire for trainings. The values can be updated based on changing prices.
Calculations	For advanced users	This contains calculations such as the exchange rates used, and the lists for variable choices elsewhere in the model.

To use the model, there are particular cells (shown in green in the model) that can be changed to more accurately reflect the planned programme design.

These cells can be used to enter a number, e.g., for the number of steering committee meetings per year, enter 4 if these meetings will be held 4 times per year (quarterly). They can also be used as a dropdown

box, to select one of the examples, e.g., for the currency choice choose between New Leones, Old Leones, GBP and USD. Do not change any other coloured cells.

For each of the Strategy/ Content/ Accreditation/ Delivery/ MEL tabs, there are key assumptions that can be varied at the top of the tab. There is also a longer list of less important assumptions that can be changed at the bottom of the tab. In some limited cases, assumptions from one tab can also affect other tabs (such as whether the accreditation involves TSC, AU or both TSC and AU).

8.3. Scenarios

This section presents four illustrative scenarios. These are based on the design presented in this report and can be seen in more detail within the costing model. Each scenario is saved as a different version of the costing model in a separate workbook. The costing model allows for the user to vary aspects of the design to understand the impact of different activities and scope on the costs.

The first three scenarios relate to the four-year implementation phase (which includes a one-year pilot) and the final scenario describes a 'steady state' phase after the initial implementation. The assumptions (in costing terms) related to the four-year implementation phase scenarios include:

- Exchange rates and unit costs do not change over time
- The programme not paying for location hire for trainings or peer learning communities, but a nominal cleaning fee provided to the locations (likely school buildings)
- The programme paying stipends to NLLs, but not to LLLs or school leaders (a daily stipend has been included for the relevant days of activities – it is possible that a monthly stipend could work out as more cost effective, and could be considered during the pre-implementation development phase, but would need to take into account practical and legal considerations)
- The programme not buying tablets or other hardware
- Exam fees and other accreditation related fees paid for by school leaders, not the programme or TSC
- SQAOs attending trainings (to be agreed)
- The delivery costs paid by the programme include:
 - o NLL daily stipends during training and coaching activities
 - o Trainings held in districts to be closer to participants
 - o Printing materials
 - o Food at training
 - o Transport to training
 - o Accommodation during training (assuming 1/3 of school leaders may live close enough to attend without requiring accommodation, receiving a smaller expense)
 - o Phone data bundles
 - o Transport to coaching visits (for the coaches)

As this is setting up a new programme, there are many initial fixed costs. As a result, the scenarios below display first year costs, and subsequent year costs. They also demonstrate the significant economies of scale from larger implementation.

The scenarios estimate costs for school leaders at **approved schools** and are split into three categories: 1) pre-primary and primary levels 2) secondary level and 3) combined. These splits are intended to guide conversations around funding which is targeted at either primary or secondary levels. The difference in costs is due to the number of schools at each level, rather than specific differences in operating costs for each level of education. As a result, the first-year pilot costs for **one unit (based on 1 NLL, 10 LLLs and 80 School Leaders)** is the same for each scenario.

It is important to note that **costs are higher when the programme is run separately for different levels on their own** due to each having its own programme management, M&E and accreditation. If all levels are run as one programme, these costs can be streamlined and made not redundant.

These scenarios are indicative and illustrate an ambitious scale up. Users can flexibly change some of the options within the model to more accurately reflect different scale up design and targeted recipients.

Pre-primary and primary scenarios

	First Year Pilot that includes setup costs	Subsequent Year Small size scale up	Subsequent Year Medium size scale up	Subsequent Year National roll out
Total School Leaders	80	1,385	4,543	6,503
LLLs	10	174	568	813
NLLs	1	18	57	82
Overall annual cost (\$USD)	837,967	1,347,359	2,852,088	2,727,227

In total, over a four-year period that included:

- First Year – Pilot that includes setup costs – piloted in one unit in one geographic location
- Subsequent Year – Small size scale up - all the approved pre-primary and primary schools in 5 districts, the smallest district from each province
- Subsequent Year – Medium size scale up - all the approved pre-primary and primary schools in 5 districts, the largest district from each province
- Subsequent Year – National roll out – all the approved pre-primary and primary schools nationwide

The total cost over this four-year period would be estimated at: USD \$7.8 million (\$7,764,521)

Secondary scenarios

	First Year Pilot that includes setup costs	Subsequent Year Small size scale up	Subsequent Year Medium size scale up	Subsequent Year National roll out
Total School Leaders	80	503	1,574	2,164
LLs	10	63	197	271
NLLs	1	7	20	28
Overall annual cost (\$USD)	837,967	762,138	1,281,404	1,189,563

In total, over a four-year period that included:

- First Year – Pilot that includes setup costs – piloted in one unit in one geographic location
- Subsequent Year – Small size scale up - all the approved JSS and SSS in 5 districts, the smallest district from each province
- Subsequent Year – Medium size scale up - all the approved JSS and SSS in 5 districts, the largest district from each province
- Subsequent Year – National roll out – all the approved JSS and SSS nationwide

The total cost over this four-year period would be estimated at: USD \$4.1 million (\$4,071,072)

Combined scenarios

	First Year Pilot that includes setup costs	Subsequent Year Small size scale up	Subsequent Year Medium size scale up	Subsequent Year National roll out
Total School Leaders	80	1,888	6,117	8,667
LLs	10	236	765	1,084
NLLs	1	24	77	109

	First Year Pilot that includes setup costs	Subsequent Year Small size scale up	Subsequent Year Medium size scale up	Subsequent Year National roll out
Overall annual cost (\$USD)	837,967	1,679,946	3,668,290	3,451,890

In total, over a four-year period that included:

- First Year – Pilot that includes setup costs – piloted in one unit in one geographic location
- Subsequent Year – Small size scale up - all the approved schools in 5 districts, the smallest district from each province
- Subsequent Year – Medium size scale up - all the approved schools in 5 districts, the largest district from each province
- Subsequent Year – National roll out – all the approved schools nationwide

The total cost over this four-year period would be estimated at: USD \$9.6 million (\$9,638,094)

‘Steady state’ scenario

After the four-year implementation phase during which the programme will have been rolled out at a national level, it is assumed that the government of Sierra Leone will take full management of the programme and use the structures established to roll out continuous professional development for school leaders on an ongoing basis.

The four-year implementation phase is designed to ensure all existing school leaders have reached the level of Competent Leader and the delivery model is in place and capacity built into the system through establishing the roles, structures, and processes necessary to carry forward the programme without external personnel or capacity support.

The costing model can estimate the costs of this ‘steady state’ scenario which involves continuing the programme after the initial investment and four-year implementation. Although the steady state scenario cost estimates are much lower than the initial four-year implementation costs, financial support might still be required for the government to continue the programme.

The steady state scenario is based on the following set of assumptions:

Programme structure and staff

- Many of the external programme team roles would discontinue after the initial four-year implementation, including the Country Director, Finance Manager, Core School Leadership Advisor, and technical support staff.
- We suggest that the MEL Manager, Project Manager and Supervisor roles transition to a single, new role at the TSC at national level within the Teacher Development and Performance

department and be supported by existing staff there. The salary costs of the role would reduce when paid at government salary level.

- TSC district officials will need to provide ongoing training and support for NLLs and LLLs as part of their existing role and responsibilities; therefore, costs for that support are not included in the steady state scenario.
- The Project Officers are temporary roles intended to support building a strong cadre of NLLs and LLLs in the initial stages of implementation and will not be required after the initial four-year phase.
- It is assumed that the accreditation process will be in place after the four-year implementation phase and non-monetary incentives established; therefore, no costs associated with incentives are included in the steady state scenario.

Programme delivery and management

In terms of delivery, in the steady state scenario we differentiate between two aspects:

1. Existing school leaders that have already gone through the programme and continue to participate in PLCs but no longer receive training or coaching.
2. New school leaders that are promoted to replace school leaders that leave the workforce and receive the full delivery model including training, coaching and PLCs.

Data is not available on the frequency with which new school leaders are promoted. However, the closest proxy may be the estimate from 'School-to-school mobility patterns and retention rates of payroll teachers in Sierra Leone' (forthcoming) that year-to-year retention rates of payroll teachers within a school is 84%. Therefore, for the steady state scenario we use the total number of approved schools at all levels (as in the final year of the combined scenario above) and assume that each year 84% of those fall within the first aspect and 16% within the second aspect.

In each aspect, the associated number of NLLs and LLLs (based on the unit ratio) is included at a similar level of delivery, i.e., the LLLs in the first aspect also receive coaching from NLLs and participate in PLCs but do not participate in inductions or trainings. In both aspects, food, transport and accommodation expenses of school leaders, LLLs and NLLs are covered.

This scenario also assumes that all initial activities related to programme set up have been conducted and only ongoing recurring activities are considered. Additional assumptions related to delivery and management include:

- Programme training content will need to be updated as new curricula, policies and sector priorities evolve. Development costs for the content will need to be covered through existing processes, however, the mechanisms for delivering the training will already be in place. Therefore, the only costs associated with content included in the steady state scenario are those for printing training materials.
- Costs for recruiting and selecting NLLs and LLLs in the steady state scenario are reduced as it is assumed that after the initial implementation phase there will be a larger pool of qualified candidates and pipeline from school leader to LLL to NLL which would result in a streamlined process for identifying existing qualified candidates for LLL and NLL roles.
- The formal training programme will continue for new school leaders and new NLLs and LLLs under the guidance of existing NLLs and LLLs.

- Costs associated with the PLC element of the programme for both new and existing school leaders are ongoing and thus included in the steady state under the same assumptions as the implementation phase.
- Maintenance associated with the technology used by the programme has been included in the steady state.
- It is assumed that any exams fees required for accreditation will be covered by school leaders themselves. Other accreditation costs have not been included as the accreditation process is currently still in development.
- The MEL elements of the programme will continue but with reduced engagement on most activities and with the Joint Monitoring Visits discontinued after the initial implementation phase.

The cost of the steady state can be reduced if any of the above activities are covered by existing roles.

	First aspect Reduced intensity for existing school leaders	Second aspect Existing intensity for new school leaders, including the reduced strategy and MEL	Total
Targeted School Leaders	7,280	1,387	8,667
LLs	910	174	1,084
NLLs	91	18	109
Overall annual cost (USD)			1,939,405

It is important to note that this scenario was developed as an ‘ideal’ state with the aim of promoting sustainability; however, a significant amount of capacity building would need to take place over the next four years to make this a reality.

The total cost for the steady state scenario would be estimated at: USD \$1.9 million per year

8.4. Financial context

The scenarios show that there are significant economies of scale from increasing the number of beneficiaries included in the programme. In the first year, where the number of targeted school leaders are small, and there are still a number of activities required to set up and prepare for implementation, the cost per beneficiary is very high. The cost per beneficiary will fall significantly as the scale of the programme is expanded in later years.

Looking at the cost per school leader for the primary and pre-primary scenario, the average costs fall from USD \$973 in Year 2 (5 small districts) to USD \$419 in Year 4 (nationwide) as the scale increases.

The costs could be lower if some of the programme management roles and activities are taken over or shared with government. Here, the salary costs are based on International NGO (INGO) scales, but if these were to transfer to government, we would expect a reduction. That said, the small share of project salary costs within the total costs (3% at national primary roll-out) means that these reductions in project salary costs is not likely to have a substantial impact on overall costs.

It is important to recognize that there are significant financial and human resource constraints on TSC being able to take over a substantial amount of the programme management tasks in the short term, given the already stretched workloads of TSC staff. This would require additions to the TSC, and an increase in their staff budgets. Using the INGO scales, the costing model estimates an overall salary cost of project staff at nationwide rollout of Old Leones 4,477 million (approx. 240,000 USD at current rates). For reference, TSC's combined costs for wages, benefits, and goods and services in 2020 was Old Leones 10,523 million in 2020 (740,000 USD at current rates).¹³ While we don't have access to the TSC salary scales, even if they were half the INGO levels the cost would still be USD 120,000 per year, requiring an additional 16% to the TSC's budget. Additionally, TSC's remit is broader than school leader TPD, and so the extent that they could take over the programme management in the short term will be limited, unless TSC receive increased funds. The 'steady state' scenario assumes a medium-term situation where capacity can be taken on within the system and by an additional project manager role within the TPD department.

This funding challenge is particularly evident with donor support being predominantly 'off-government budget' in Sierra Leone. For example, TPD development funding in the World Bank FREE Education Project in the 2020 Project Appraisal Document¹⁴ allocates USD 17 million over the 2019-2023 period to teacher professional development and a further USD 1 million over the same period to teacher workforce planning. With other funders such as FCDO also focusing on particular levels, this suggests that nationwide roll out could be feasibly achieved with donor support, whilst efforts continue to support government's financial and human resources to be able to take on more of the programme activities.

¹³ <https://mofsl.gov.sl/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Annual-Accounts-2020-Unaudited.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/957041593741800590/pdf/Sierra-Leone-Free-Education-Project.pdf>

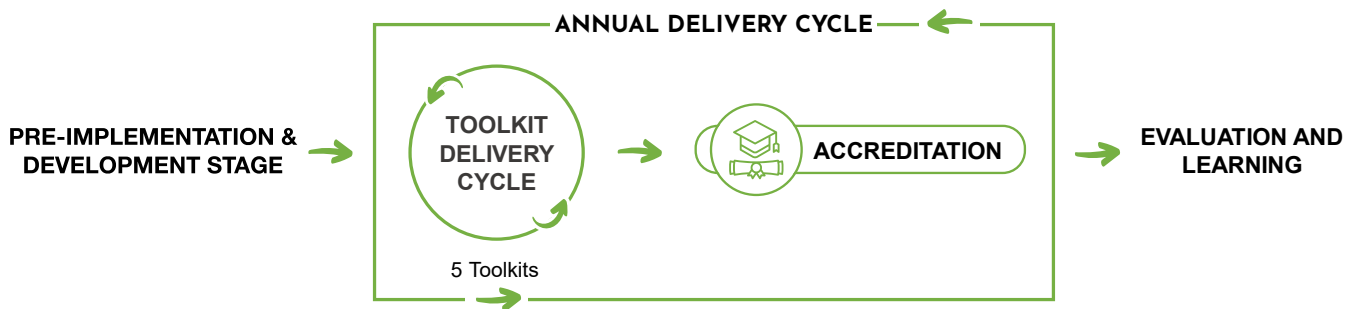
9. Implementation

9.1. Overview of implementation

Implementation of the programme is divided into a pre-implementation development stage and annual programme delivery cycles (see Figure 7), with the first year dedicated to piloting. Evaluation and learning will be ongoing throughout annual delivery cycles. The following section will focus on the pre-implementation development stage as the annual delivery cycles and evaluation and learning are described in previous sections.

Both the pre-implementation and implementation plan have been developed in a separate excel sheet (see ‘Sierra Leone School Leadership Programme- Implementation Plan’) and can be referenced for more details on activities, timing and contingencies, and roles and responsibilities.

Figure 7: Overview of programme implementation



9.2. Pre-implementation development stage

For the pre-implementation development stage, we have created an implementation roadmap (see Figure 8) based on the costing model's headline activity categories (strategy, content, accreditation, delivery, and MEL), with the goal of making it a live document that helps the team and project manager throughout each stage of the programme.

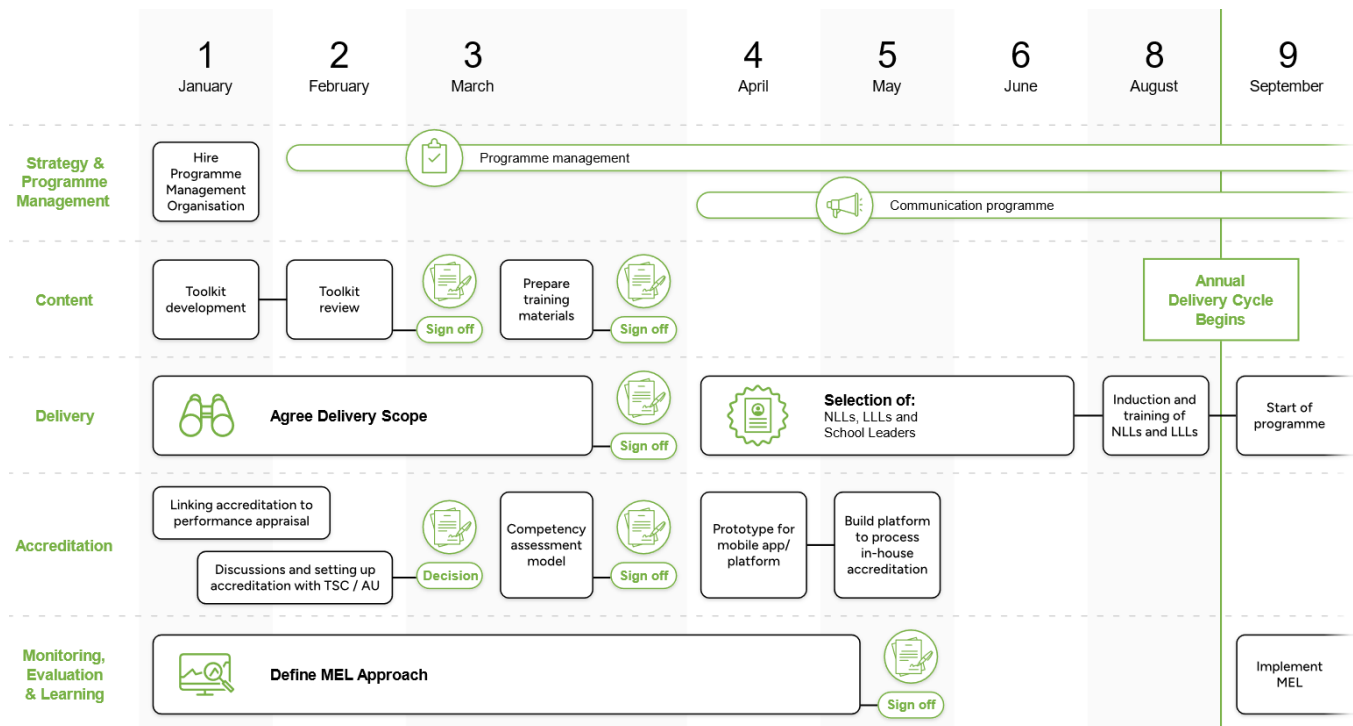
The timelines provided are indicative and assume a January 2023 start date and a piloting phase in schools beginning in September 2023, with the start of the 2023/2024 school academic year. Delays in start dates are anticipated and timelines provided can be adjusted accordingly. Each headline activity has sub-activities, nearly all of which can begin at the same time.



Special considerations: Two factors that will affect the pre-implementation activities are: 1) the end of the current school year is July 2023 and 2) general elections are scheduled for Sierra Leone in June 2023.

Given this, **the selection of NLLs, LLLs, and school leaders** – a key step to ensuring timely implementation— **should be completed before the June 2023 general elections during the current school year.**

Figure 8: Pre-implementation development stage



As shown in Figure 8, there are five overarching activities required for the pre-implementation development phase (Months 1-8, or January- August 2023). These include: Strategy and programme management (communications sits under this category), Content, Delivery, Accreditation, and Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL). The detailed implementation plan which includes sub-activities can be found in Annex I and will be shared in the original excel file to serve as a flexible planning tool. The detailed plan also includes enabling factors that need to happen throughout, but that may not be led by the programme management team. These include revising national policy and guidelines to align with the programme and clarifying the mandates for the professional development of school leaders. Other recommended actions include:

- Clarifying the mandate for school leaders during review of the Education Act and TSC Act
- Reviewing and clarifying the national school leader job description and considering capping the number of teaching hours for school leaders (through the TSC HR Manual and Teacher Management Policy)
- Agreeing which data should be collected nationally on school leaders moving forward

- Developing school leader policy guidelines (to be funded by FCDO).

9.3. Piloting the school leadership programme

The piloting of the school leader programme is proposed for one academic year, starting in September 2023. Details for the pilot will be agreed in the pre-implementation phase, but we suggest the criteria outlined in Table 16.

Table 16: Suggested criteria for school leadership programme pilot

Criteria	
Location	→ One district → Accessible area centrally located so the programme can be easily monitored and adapted, such as Western Area Urban or Port Loko → Target middle-performing area of district
Education level	→ The Steering Committee recommended piloting at pre-primary and primary levels given Sierra Leone's prioritisation of foundational learning and the programme's focus on promoting women school leaders (women make up a greater share of school leaders and deputies at these levels). The level of education for the pilot will ultimately be determined by available funding.
Type of schools/ school leaders	→ Include mix of high and low performing schools as well as some remotely located schools (to help test programme in face of inevitable connectivity issues) → Consideration should also be given to those school leaders participating in other relevant programmes (such as TEACH/COACH and One Tablet Per School).
Scale	→ At a minimum, the pilot should target one unit (as defined in the delivery approach) which includes 1 National Leader of Learning, 10 Local leaders of Learning and 80 school leaders.



Special consideration: Given the accreditation process has yet to be agreed, it will be key to determine what type of certification those school leaders, Local Leaders of Learning and National Leaders of Learning in the piloting phase will receive.

9.4. Governance & programme management team requirements

It is assumed that the school leadership programme will be led by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and Teaching Service Commission in partnership with an organisation and consultants to support initial programme management, implementation and scale up.

A programme management team is key to ensuring actions and deliverables are mapped, managed and monitored and are reported to the government and Steering Committee.

Suggested key roles and responsibilities for a programme team are outlined in Table 17 below.

Table 17: Programme team roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
TSC and MBSSE	→ Lead government agencies responsible for developing and implementing the programme and overseeing programme team.
Steering Committee	→ Provide continuity from design to implementation phase and will be consulted by programme team for input and guidance as needed.
Programme manager	→ Oversee programme delivery and the management of project workstreams. → Oversee programme governance, compliance, budget management, contract terms, KPIs, and deliverables. → Line manager relevant team members, ensuring strong team performance and the quality of programme outputs and project activities. → Create and maintain constructive relations with other key partners and stakeholders. → Visit field sites to monitor work and ensure sharing of best practice and learnings internally, in the wider region, and globally.
Programme supervisors	→ Transition role to support as the programme is being implemented and scaled. → Primarily to provide support for NLLs and to help with coordination among various stakeholders, including other government roles at district level. → Help ensure strong team performance and quality of programme activities.
School leadership advisor	→ Quality Assurance of deliverables and reports, strategic development process, guidance on school leadership → Support LLLs and NLLS capacity development through → Develop training materials → Deliver training programme → Support school leaders → Content development of 5 toolkits → Coaching

Role	Responsibilities
	→ PLCs
Short-term technical consultants	→ Subject specialists responsible for creating content and delivering training. Will facilitate training sessions, lesson preparation, gather feedback on sessions, conduct observations on cascaded training, and provide coaching. → Ensure programme meets requirements and ESP and RIP build relationships with regional and district level organisations and government bodies → Provide technical expertise on CSE and GBV to support the design and implementation of the programme. → Build strong relationships with national, regional and district level MBSSE, Ministry of Health and other relevant ministry officials responsible for addressing education and gender-related matters. → Support MEL colleagues in formulating indicators to measure the effectiveness of gender-related interventions
In-country delivery support roles	→ Technology adviser- responsible for overseeing technical elements of the solution to ensure the course is interactive and all the functional requirements of the online platform are aligned with the course. → Technology advisor will work alongside the Content Development and Delivery Team to advise on preparing interactive content. Involvement at an early stage will ensure that the content is developed with interactivity in mind. Once the content is developed, the technology advisor will further develop storyboards to maximise the interactive elements of the content and increase engagement with the material. → Mobilisation/ implementation to oversee progress and quality of programme implementation and stakeholder engagement where required. → Copy editor - Reviewing content for accuracy, readability, and consistency
MEL manager	→ Leading, designing, managing, and undertaking high quality monitoring and evaluation of the project. → Ensuring adherence to ethical standards (e.g., confidentiality of data) during all phases of the evaluation. → Oversee data collection
Data co-ordinator	→ Supporting report production, coordinating data from multiple sources and verifying integrity of the data from evaluations, building insights into the review process and making recommendations for improvement.

9.5. Risk management

Table 18 identifies potential risks to implementing the programme successfully and provides suggestions for how they could be mitigated.

Table 18: Key risks & mitigation strategies for programme implementation

Risk	Mitigation strategies
Funding gap: In order to begin piloting in Sept 2023, the pre-implementation development phase will need to begin January 2023; however, funding has currently not been secured which could delay the process and jeopardise starting the pilot at the beginning of the 2023 school year. There is an ongoing risk that funding will not be secured for full roll out of the programme	→ Discussion with TSC about how the programme fits within the current budget. → Discussion with donors around possibility of securing additional funding to begin the pre-implementation development phase, pilot and roll out.
National elections: National elections are to be held in June 2023 which would be during the pre-implementation phase of the programme. Depending on election results, delays or other significant road blocks to the project might take place if new officials have different priorities to the current administration's or need to be briefed and brought on board in order to support implementation of the programme.	→ Ensure school leaders, LLLs and NLLs are recruited and selected before the elections. → Ensure programme management team is prepared to brief any new officials.
Availability of technology and internet across participating schools: Variability in access to devices and internet connectivity across Sierra Leone could constrain the online aspects of the programme, creating additional costs or exacerbating existing disparities across areas.	→ Pilot in a district/area where there is confirmed connectivity. → Pilot in schools participating in the One Tablet Per School programme to ensure access to devices (and training on how to use them) as well as connectivity. → Scale up alongside One Tablet Per School programme schools. → Ensure additional support for schools with lack of access to devices and internet.

9.6. Next steps

It is recommended that the pre-implementation development phase begin as soon as possible (January 2023). There are a few key next steps that should take place as part of the transition from the design phase to the pre-implementation development phase. These include:

- **Securing funding** – The TSC should aim to secure funding for implementation as soon as possible; priority should be given to ‘bridge funding’ to ensure momentum is not lost from the design to pre-development phase.
- **Aligning with system elements and initiatives** – A sharing event was held in January 2023 to help ensure all relevant government agencies and external partners understand the programme design and how their work and initiatives need to align. Decisions will need to be made on how best to coordinate during development and implementation of the programme. Additional one-on-one meetings might be required to get to the next level of detail on coordination. A meeting with the Directorate of School Quality Assurance is highly recommended.
- **Clarifying the mandate for school leadership professional development and management** – This will require agreement between the TSC and MBSSE and codification of the role and responsibilities through the revision of the Education Act and TSC Act. School leader policy guidelines will also be started in January.

The ‘Sierra Leone School Leadership Programme: Implementation Plan’ can be referenced for more details on both immediate next steps and longer-term planning.

10. Annexes

Annex A: Steering Committee members

Annex B: School leader competency framework for Sierra Leone

Annex C: Mapping of competency framework to Professional Standards and Radical Inclusion

Annex D: Mapping of proposed toolkit content to competency framework

Annex E: Sample toolkit overview

Annex F: Programme overview diagram

Annex G: Detailed commitment level for National Leaders of Learning (NLLs) and Local Leaders of Learning (LLLs)

10.1. Annex A – Steering committee members

Name	Title, Organisation
Emily Gogra	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE)
Conrad Sackey	Chairman, Teaching Service Commission (TSC)
Sorie Turay	Secretary, Teaching Service Commission (TSC)
Yatta Kanu	CEO, Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE)
Frances Kamara	Head of Inspection, Ministry of Labour and Social Security
Samuel Koroma	National Council of Head teachers (NaCoHT)
Ophelia Morrison	Council of Principals of Secondary Schools (CPSS)
Morris Conteh	Sierra Leone Teachers Union (SLTU)
Aliyageen Alghali	Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)
Theresa Saccoh	Nursery School Association
Samba Moriba	Teacher Training Institutes (TTI)
Musu Gorvie	Ministry of Tertiary and Higher Education (MTHE)
Victor Llieu	Tertiary Education Commission
Grace Kamanda	Council of Technical and Vocational Education
Edwin Momoh	Chair, Conference of Universities & Polytechnics
Cream Wright	Independent

Name	Title, Organisation
Aminata Sessay	Independent
Brian Conton	Independent
Helen Kailie	Independent
Amy Bellinger	Education Commission
Katie Goldwin	Education Commission
Miriam Mason	EducAid
Ros Hancell	Education Development Trust
Jean-Pierre Mugiraneza	Education Development Trust
Andrea Tiganescu	Education Development Trust
Alasdair Mackintosh	Fab Inc.
María José Ogando Portela	Fab Inc.
Stephen Harvey	FCDO
Jamie Proctor	FCDO
Mari Shoji	World Bank
Marcela Gutierrez	World Bank
Celeste Stacey	UNICEF
Aiah Mbayo	UNICEF
Emmanuel Allie	Global Partnership for Education

10.2. Annex B – School leader competency framework for Sierra Leone

Competency One: Demonstrating a commitment to improving learning outcomes and promoting inclusion					
	Emerging Leader	Developing Leader	Competent Leader	Local Leader of Learning	National Leader of Learning
1.1 Development and communication of a school vision and mission that fits the context	School community is not engaged.	School community including teachers are engaged. Meetings are attended but community does not play an active part in decision making.	Meetings with the school community have taken place. A vision and mission that fits the context was developed in partnership with stakeholders.	School vision and mission has been developed and can be clearly explained by the pupils, staff and members of the community. There is a clear link to improving learning and inclusion	There is evidence that this has resulted in other leaders developing and communicating a relevant vision and mission for the school.
1.2 Planning for the professional development of teachers	No assessment/appraisal of teacher CPD needs have been conducted	Some assessment of CPD needs have taken place. Plans for teachers CPD either do not exist or they are not backed up by evidence	Assessment of teachers CPD needs was comprehensive. Findings have been analysed, and there is a plan in place which is being implemented.	The CPD plan for teachers shows specific dates, resources and time allocation. Teachers can reflect on how the CPD has improved aspects of learning/ their teaching	There is evidence that this has resulted in other leaders developing and communicating plans for teachers CPD which can be linked to improvements in learning/inclusion
1.3 Developing a relevant school improvement plan (SIP)	There is a school improvement plan	The SIP has been started but not finalised	Stakeholders (teachers, parents, SMC/CTA/BoG) are aware of the SIP and know what it is.	SIP has dates and actions which have been agreed and shared. The SIP is clearly linked to improving learning and inclusion	There is evidence that this has resulted in other leaders developing and communicating a SIP which is linked to improvements in learning/inclusion
1.4 Assessing the barriers to education for children from disadvantaged groups	Minimum assessment may have been carried out	Some assessment for all groups has been conducted but remains incomplete	An assessment has been finalised. Groups requiring additional support have been identified. Teachers are aware of the needs of these groups.	There is a clear plan identifying how each group will be supported. The plan identifies dates, actions and resources required	There is evidence that this has resulted in other leaders developing, communicating and resourcing targeted plans to support disadvantaged learners.

1.5 Carrying out effective monitoring of teaching and learning	No monitoring of teaching and learning has been carried out.	There is evidence that monitoring systems and processes are being developed.	Monitoring systems and processes have been developed and agreed with teachers. There is evidence that monitoring of teaching and learning has been carried out.	Monitoring systems and processes are embedded in the annual improvement cycle and reflected in the SIP. Teachers can reflect on how this has improved aspects of learning /their teaching.	There is evidence that this has resulted in other leaders developing monitoring systems and processes which can be linked to improvements in learning/ inclusion. There is evidence that teachers from other schools reflect on how this has improved aspects of learning /their teaching. There is evidence that effective coaching has been provided for emerging leaders.
1.6 Observing teaching and learning to improve the quality of learning and the inclusion for all	Observations of teaching and learning do not occur. Positive relationships between adults in the school have not been established.	Plans for observations of teaching and learning appear in the school plan (SIP; CPD etc) but have not been carried out.	Observations of teaching and learning have happened as per the plan and with the co-operation of teachers. Trusting and respectful relationships have been established between teachers and leaders.	Observations result in leaders and teachers agreeing individual and/ school wide actions to address strengths and areas for development focused on improving the quality of learning for all.	There is evidence that this has resulted in other leaders agreeing individual and/ school wide actions to address strengths and areas for development focused on improving the quality of learning for all. There is evidence that teachers from other schools reflect on how this has improved aspects of learning /their teaching.
1.7 Providing effective feedback and guidance to teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning	No mechanism is in place to provide feedback and/ guidance to teachers on their practice/performance	There is evidence that the systems and process to enable leaders to provide feedback and guidance to teachers is being developed.	Systems and processes to provide feedback and guidance to teachers have been developed and implemented and agreed with teachers.	Feedback and guidance given to teachers can be linked to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers can reflect on how this has improved aspects of learning /their teaching.	There is evidence that this has resulted in other leaders providing feedback and guidance to teachers which can be linked to improvements in learning/ inclusion. There is evidence that Teachers from other schools reflect on how this has improved aspects of learning /their teaching.

Competency Two: Promoting a culture of continuous self-sustaining school improvement					
	Emerging Leader	Developing Leader	Competent Leader	Local Leader of Learning	National Leader of Learning
2.1 Developing effective school self-review systems and processes	No school performance review /review of existing teachers has been carried out.	There is evidence that a school performance review meeting was conducted.	There is evidence that reviewing the performance of the school is established in the cycle of the annual calendar and reviews are carried out.	Reviewing the performance of the school by the leadership team and key stakeholders happens routinely and informs the SIP and the CPD plan. Stakeholders are aware of the outcomes of the review and the link to SIP, CPD and learning and inclusion.	There is evidence that this has resulted in leaders from other schools carrying out effective school self-review linked to SIP and CPD plans.
2.2 Establishing Communities of Practice CoP within the school, to support improvements to the quality of teaching and learning	Teachers and leaders have not formed a Community of Practice. School leader does not delegate.	Some teachers have created an informal group which meets irregularly to discuss issues and challenges. School leader is beginning to identify teachers and teams as agents of change within the school.	A CoP meets regularly. SL leverages meetings to distribute leadership activities. The structure/ purpose of these meetings is to improve learning outcomes as identified in the SIP.	A CoP is well established. The group is focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers can reflect on how this has improved aspects of learning /their teaching.	There is evidence that this has resulted in leaders from other schools establishing CoPs which are focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
2.3 Using the school grant effectively to support learners	There is no evidence of how the grant is used to support learning and inclusion.	There is evidence that the deployment/ use of the grant has been discussed.	The school self- review, SIP and CPD plan are linked to the deployment of the grant.	The school targets the resources from the grant to improve the outcome of all children and especially those facing additional barriers to learning.	There is evidence that this has resulted in leaders from other schools targeting the grant to meet the learning needs and inclusion needs of vulnerable groups.

Competency Three: Modelling and guiding leadership or learning for the inclusion and safety of all within the school

	Emerging Leader	Developing Leader	Competent Leader	Local Leader of Learning	National Leader of Learning
3.1 Guiding teachers on improving the quality of learning and inclusion	Inclusion of disadvantaged learners and actions to improve learning outcomes is not evident in any school plans. (SIP self-review, CPD, stakeholder engagement).	There is evidence that inclusion and learning outcomes of disadvantaged groups has been discussed.	The school aims and objectives in the SIP identify the needs of disadvantaged learners and to promote their inclusion. There is evidence that this has been shared with stakeholders.	Each teacher is aware of the learning levels of disadvantaged learners they teach. Each teacher has a plan to address these needs for the children they teach. Support has been provided to enable teachers to deliver this plan.	There is evidence that this has resulted in leaders from other schools developing plans which meet the learning and inclusion needs of disadvantaged groups.
3.2 Ensuring pupils and adults are safe and treated with respect within the school	Teachers and pupils lack respect for each other and for the school environment. Corporal & humiliating punishments are still evident.	There is evidence that adults and children act to keep themselves and others safe. Corporal & humiliating punishments are largely eradicated.	Evidence shows that relationships are positive, and respect is shown between all adults. There are secure systems and processes which ensure the safety of all. These are shared with and understood by parents and other stakeholders. Corporal & humiliating punishments are replaced with respectful alternative behaviour management strategies.	Respectful relationships are evident. Establishing and maintaining respectful relationships are prioritised by all members of the school community.	There is evidence that these ways of working are being shared with other school leaders who are starting to use them in their schools.
3.3 Guiding teachers on safeguarding of pupils and colleagues	School leaders carry out basic government requirements on safeguarding but are unaware of any safeguarding issues related to bullying and violence in school. Teachers are not equipped to deal with safeguarding issues.	Leaders and teachers have received safeguarding training and are aware of safeguarding issues such as bullying and physical and sexual abuse amongst pupils and adults. They do not always deal with incidents effectively	Ensuring the safety and well-being of all pupils and adults is a priority. Issues with site safety, bullying and violence are dealt with immediately and effectively by leaders and teachers.	Leaders and teachers are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all pupils, resulting in higher attendance rates.	All stakeholders are committed to safeguarding. The school shares effective safeguarding practice with families and other schools. Senior leaders work together on safeguarding issues at a local level.

3.4 Guiding teachers on pupils' personal developments including behaviour for learning.	Behaviour around the school is unruly. School leaders do not have the strategies to resolve these issues.	Leaders are more visible around the school and address misbehaviour when they see it. There is a punitive approach to managing behaviour to overcome historic patterns. Teachers have greater awareness of their responsibility to manage pupil behaviour.	School leaders and teachers have a better understanding of their responsibility to manage behaviour. Leaders actively engage in partnerships with parents to improve pupils' personal development. There are respectful relationships between pupils and teachers. Most pupils behave responsibly.	There is an orderly environment in classrooms and around the school. Leaders and teachers are developing expertise in dealing with challenging behaviour. Each teacher has a plan in place to support the pupils who demonstrate the most challenging behaviours. Pupils demonstrate well developed attitudes to learning. Pupils are taught to respect and value differences.	Leaders demonstrate expertise in enhancing attitudes to learning. Leaders and teachers have expertise in working with children and families in managing challenging behaviours. These approaches and strategies are shared with other schools.
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Competency Four: Using evidence to plan, implement and review improvements to inclusion and learning					
	Emerging Leader	Developing Leader	Competent Leader	Local Leader of Learning	National Leader of Learning
4.1 Collecting, analysing and using data to inform planning and drive improvement	Data is not used to inform decisions on improvement planning.	The collection of data has been identified and included in the school self-review/SIP.	Data which identifies learning and progress of groups of learners has been collected and analysed (e.g., girls, children with additional learning needs and children from low socio-economic groups).	Data is regularly used to inform the schools plans and actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning.	There is evidence that this has resulted in leaders from other schools using data to inform planning and actions to improve teaching and learning.

Competency Five: The school leader will work collectively with all stakeholders to drive school and system improvement					
	Emerging Leader	Developing Leader	Competent Leader	Local Leader of Learning	National Leader of Learning
5.1 Engaging stakeholders to improve teaching and learning and inclusion	Stakeholders are not engaged in the Mission or vision self-review, SIP or CPD plan for the school.	A stakeholder engagement plan has been developed, but not implemented.	The stakeholder engagement plan is followed. There is evidence that meetings happen as planned and some stakeholders know what is in the school self- review and SIP.	The engagement of most stakeholders focusses on improving the quality of learning, teaching, and inclusion. There is evidence that stakeholders understand the successes and challenges of the school and offer support to address these.	There is evidence that this has resulted in leaders from other schools engaging stakeholders on improving the quality of learning, teaching, and inclusion.
5.2 Developing respectful relationships across the whole school community	Relationships between stakeholders e.g. SMC/CTA/BoG are challenging. Stakeholders do not work collaboratively to support school improvement.	A plan to improve relationships and build trust has been developed but not implemented. Meetings between school and SMC/CTA/BoG take place.	The relationship management plan is followed. There is evidence that meetings happen as planned and some stakeholders are working collaboratively to support school improvement The SL has supportive meetings with all staff that are minuted and actions recorded.	There is evidence that stakeholders work together and offer support to the school understand the successes and challenges of the school and offer support to address these.	There is evidence that this has resulted in leaders from other schools engaging stakeholders to improve the quality of relationships. These collaborative relationships support the improvement of learning, teaching, and inclusion.

10.3. Annex C – Mapping of competency framework to professional standards and radical inclusion policy

The Sierra Leone TSC has established 'professional standards for school leaders', under five headings and subdivided into 49 sub-standards, that school leaders can expect to meet. Twenty-seven of these professional sub-standards have been matched with the proposed leadership competencies in the matrix below. These are the professional standards that most closely describe leadership skills that promote high quality provision and improve outcomes for learners. The other 22 professional sub-standards are less readily matched with the proposed competencies as they typically fall outside the scope of focus on instructional leadership.

	Competency 1 Demonstrating a commitment to improving learning outcomes and promoting inclusion	Competency 2 Promoting a culture of continuous self-sustaining school improvement	Competency 3 Modelling and guiding leadership or learning for the inclusion and safety of all within the school	Competency 4 Using evidence to plan, implement and review improvements to inclusion and learning	Competency 5 The school leader will work collectively with all stakeholders to drive school and system improvement	Professional Standards for School Leaders in Sierra Leone which fall outside of scope of the programme
Professional Standard 1 Nurture self for leadership excellence				1.10		Sub-standards 1.1 - 1.9 aptitudes and skills identified are personal qualities do not reflect instructional leadership.
Professional Standard 2 Lead professional knowledge	2.3 - 2.6					Sub-standards 2.1, 2.2 and 2.7 apply to knowledge of the international context and education policies within Sierra Leone.
Professional Standard 3 Lead professional practice	3.1 - 3.3		3.1 - 3.3, 3.5			Sub-standard 3.4 focuses on extra-curricular activities
Professional Standard 4 Lead professional engagement	4.1, 4.6		4.2		4.3, 4.4, 4.5	None
Professional Standard 5 Lead organisational management and transformation engagement	5.2 - 5.4, 5.8, 5.12	5.6, 5.8, 5.10, 5.14	5.5		5.1, 5.7, 5.11	Sub-standards 5.9, 5.13 and 5.15 - 5.21 define personal leadership skills and functions in regard to HR, technology and financial management, maintenance of school facilities and external relations.

A commitment to improving inclusion is embedded throughout the school leader competencies and sub-competencies. These have been aligned with the four policy statements as presented in Sierra Leone's Radical Inclusion policy. The mapping of which is shown below:

Radical Inclusion Policy	Competency 1 Demonstrating a commitment to improving learning outcomes and promoting inclusion	Competency 2 Promoting a culture of continuous self-sustaining school improvement	Competency 3 Modelling and guiding leadership or learning for the inclusion and safety of all within the school	Competency 4 Using evidence to plan, implement and review improvements to inclusion and learning	Competency 5 The school leader will work collectively with all stakeholders to drive school and system improvement
Policy Statement 1 Create inclusive learning environments	Sub-competencies 1.1, 1.3 link school vision and SIP to inclusion. 1.6 Observing teaching and learning to improve inclusion for all. 1.7 Providing effective feedback and guidance to teachers to improve inclusion		Sub-competency 3.1 Guiding teachers on improving inclusion - school aims in the SIP identify needs of disadvantaged learners and promote inclusion. 3.3 Guiding teachers on safeguarding and behaviour for learning.		
Policy Statement 2 Target support for vulnerable learners ¹⁵	1.4 Assessing the barriers to education for children from disadvantaged groups	2.3 Using the school grant effectively to support learners The school targets the resources from the grant to improve the outcome of those facing additional barriers to learning.		4.1 Collecting, analysing and using data to inform planning and drive improvement Including for disadvantaged groups of learners.	
Policy Statement 3 Engage families and communities					5.1 Engaging stakeholders to improving inclusion
Policy Statement 4 An enabling policy environment	National policy implications to be considered here fall outside the scope of school leader competencies.				

¹⁵ Target groups identified in the Radical Inclusion policy include; i) students living in poor socio-economic conditions, ii) those living in rural remote areas, iii) those living with disabilities, and (iv) girls, especially pregnant girls and adolescent parents returning to school.

10.4. Annex D - Mapping of proposed toolkit content to competency framework

The toolkit content and activities are designed to ensure explicit alignment to the school leader competency framework as demonstrated in the table below.

			Competency 1							Competency 2			Competency 3				Competency 4	Competency 5	
			1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	2.1	2.2	2.3	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	5.1	5.2
Toolkit 1 - Developing leadership skills to improve learning outcomes for all	1.1	The moral purpose of school leadership and establishing collective efficacy																	
	1.2	The elements of effective school leadership																	
	1.3	Leading change and school improvement.																	
	1.4	Inclusion awareness																	
	1.5	Overcoming the barriers for marginalised groups and girls																	
	1.6	Supporting girls' learning																	
	1.7	Behaviour management for inclusive learning.																	
Toolkit 2 - Leading teaching and learning	2.1	Creating effective relationships for leading and learning																	
	2.2	The elements of effective teaching and learning.																	
	2.3	Developing the skills to monitor teaching and learning.																	
	2.4	Evaluating teaching and learning.																	
	2.5	Linking monitoring and evaluation to continued professional development.																	
Toolkit 3 - Community and stakeholder engagement	3.1	Stakeholder engagement - the benefits to and responsibility of school leaders																	
	3.2	Leadership strategies for effective engagement with stakeholders.																	
	3.3	Planning to strengthen engagement with stakeholders.																	
Toolkit 4 - Curriculum development and learning teams	4.1	Leading curriculum development - Foundational learning and SSE curriculum																	
	4.2	Supporting women in leadership																	
	4.3	Developing a school plan for inclusion.																	
Toolkit 5 - Leadership for safety and equity	5.1	Understanding the need for safety for all																	
	5.2	Behaviour and conduct which support safety and learning																	
	5.3	Prioritising safety and equity																	
	5.4	Developing a school plan for safety and equity - leadership strategies and stakeholder engagement for safety and equity																	

10.5. Annex E – Sample toolkit overview

The table below illustrates a sample overview of one of the proposed tools in Toolkit 1. The overview shows how each tool provides clear alignment to the competency framework, clear outcomes, structured self-learning activities and key learning points from the tool. Estimated time for completion of each tool is also provided as well as references to supporting materials and resources.

Tool 1.2 - Leading change and school improvement

This tool will take approximately 9 hours to complete.

Leadership sub-competencies associated with this tool: 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 4.1

Documents required for this section are:

- Your school improvement plan

Support materials required for this section are:

- The competency framework (CF)
- The inspection school standards (IS)
- The improvement plan template (SIP)

Outcomes:

- To understand a cycle of improvement.
- To use the SMART approach to prioritisation.
- To understanding the characteristics to be considered when planning changes.
- To understanding how to influence these characteristics to overcome barriers to change.
- To construct an effective improvement plan.

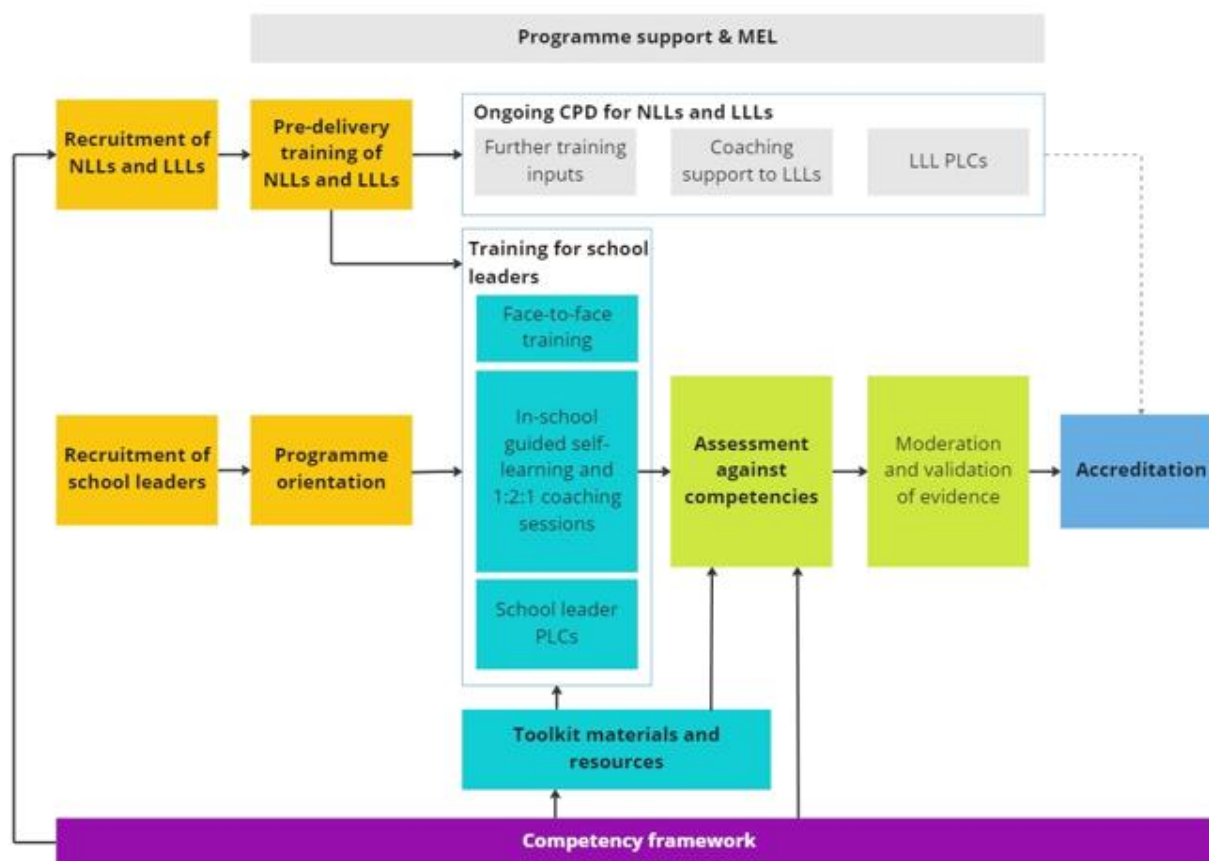
Sample activities:

- Reflect on a recent aspect of school improvement that you have led.
- Compare your activities for improvement to the five stages within the improvement cycle.
- Practice writing school priorities that can be referred to as SMART targets.
- Identify the barriers and resistance to change when embarking on improvement to teaching.
- Consider actions or CPD opportunities that can facilitate overcoming of difficulties.
- Reflect on purpose of monitoring activities.
- Practice writing a school improvement development plan

The main learning points from these tools

- All schools should establish a cycle of improvement
- For a cycle of improvement to succeed the school has to establish a culture of high expectations with the following characteristics, a shared vision, trusting and respectful relationships, a learning culture that values leadership, risk taking and the contribution of all stakeholders.
- The SMART approach is a useful tool when articulating priorities, aims, targets and goals
- Negative characteristics of change must be addressed to mitigate their impact on improvement.
- Teachers and stakeholders must feel part of the change process.
- Monitoring involves examining evidence from a range of sources
- Monitoring activity is not a punitive process and should be carried out in partnership between school leaders, stakeholders and teachers.
- The evaluation of evidence derived from monitoring activities is a critical part of the process of school improvement.
- It should involve a range of stakeholders within the school.
- It should be part of a regular cycle of school improvement.

10.6. Annex F - Programme overview diagram



10.7. Annex G – Anticipated commitment level for national leaders of learning (NLLs) and local leaders of learning (LLLs)

The tables below outline the calculations used in determining the anticipated commitment level required by NLLs and LLLs in delivering the programme to school leaders.

	Delivery of toolkit content at cluster meeting	Guided self-learning supported in-school through 1-2-1 coaching	Professional learning communities (PLCs) consolidate and expand on learning
LLL delivery role:	2-day training delivery (plus 0.5 days prep), twice per term (15 days per school year)	2 days per school visit per term (48 days per school year for 8 school leaders) + follow-up phone calls (2 additional days per term/6 days per year)	1 day per F2F PLC (including travel & prep) – 3 days per year + ½ day per virtual PLC – 1.5 days per year
LLL CPD:	3-day pre-implementation training course, plus 3 further face-to-face training sessions (2 days x 3), coaching phone calls with NLL (2 x 1 hour per term – 0.5 days per term x 3), LLL PLC 1 per term (0.5 days x 3)		
TOTAL:	This totals approx. 85 days per school year (on average, 2 days per week)		
NLL commitment required:	NLLs will facilitate district-level PLCs for LLLs – once per term, 2 F2F, 1 virtual (0.5 days x 3 – 1.5 days per school year) NLLs will communicate regularly with LLLs to provide support and mentoring through phone calls – assume 2 x 1 hour phone sessions per term per LLL (3 days per term/9 days per school year) NLLs to attend 3-day pre-implementation training course, plus support delivery of 3 further F2F training sessions for LLLs (2-days delivery and 1 day prep each) per school year.		
TOTAL:	This totals approx. 23 days per school year (on average, 0.5 days per week)		