

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

FOR

IMPLEMENTATION SERVICE PROVIDERS (ISPs)

FOR THE

DIGITAL FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM

APRIL 2025

A. INTRODUCTION

Imagine Worldwide is a non-profit organisation whose goal is to solve the literacy and numeracy crisis for millions of children across Sub-Saharan Africa. We do this by partnering with governments, organisations and communities to provide child-directed, tech-enabled learning that is accessible, effective, and affordable at scale.

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL), through the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) and in collaboration with Imagine Worldwide (IW) intend to begin implementation of the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** to improve primary school children's acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. As an edtech program, the implementation of **Digital Foundational Learning Program** entails supplemental use of individualised, self-paced instruction delivered through specialised apps on tablets. The next cohort of this program will involve the rollout of a tablet-based learning intervention to Primary 1- 4 pupils in up to 750 public primary schools by July 2026. Should the program result in positive learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy, the learning solution will be implemented countrywide.

By July 2026, the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** intends to roll out to 750 schools in 11 districts namely, Tonkolili, Port Loko, Koinadugu, Western Area Urban, Bo, Bonthe, Falaba, Kailahun, Kenema, Moyamba, and Karene. The objectives of this rollout is to:

- Complement efforts in improving the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills among primary school learners towards emergent and fluent status in reading and arithmetic.
- Enhance the education systems' capacity to embrace the use of technology in supporting instruction in public schools and ICT capacity building at the school, district, and central levels.
- Build the capacity of government education authorities to support the implementation of the **Digital Foundational Learning Program**.
- Monitor and evaluate the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** implementation to collect lessons learned to inform revision of protocols for the next phase of the rollout.

Imagine Worldwide is seeking proposals from qualified organisations to provide technical and operational support for the implementation of the anticipated **Digital Foundational Learning Program**.

B. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The **Digital Foundational Learning Program** program specifically aims to:

1. Equip 750 public primary schools in eleven districts with the required technology and support systems to enhance pupils' acquisition of skills in reading and arithmetic, including:
 - Developing detailed plans for the roll out of the technology-enabled literacy and numeracy program.
 - Reviewing instructional content in the tablet program to ensure alignment with Sierra Leone's national literacy and numeracy curriculum, and working with the software publisher to make adjustments as needed.

- Providing schools with the required software, hardware, solar panels, and associated accessories for children to access the tablet program to support literacy and numeracy learning activities.
 - Building the capacity of teachers and school leaders to deliver the program focusing on facilitating lessons, managing timetables, and providing technical support.
 - Mobilising and creating awareness among local school communities about the project in order to enhance local support of the program.
2. Institutionalise the use of the technology in supporting foundational literacy and numeracy instruction in Sierra Leone’s primary schools for long-term sustainability, including:
- Strengthening pre-service teachers’ knowledge and skills in using technology to support teaching with a particular focus on the program already in schools.
 - Developing a network of technical officers at local school, and district levels to ensure readily available technical support to address local technical challenges schools may encounter.
 - Institutionalising a monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning system to ensure data from the program are fully utilised in monitoring pupil progress and driving accountability.
 - Conducting rigorous research focused on implementation fidelity and impact to ensure continuous learning and improvements in the rollout processes, and learning models, as well as to guide ongoing scale efforts and program sustainability.
 - Reviewing policy on national primary school timetables in early grades to ensure proper integration of the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** lessons as well as provision of regular budgetary support to ensure sustainability.

C. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

In order to ensure adequate technical and operational support to MBSSE district level implementation structures and further build required capacity and skills transfer before the program is transferred to the government, **Implementation Service Providers (ISPs)** will be deployed. Implementation Service Providers (ISPs) will be recruited to provide technical and operational support during implementation of the 2025/2026 cohort of schools, and to build capacity and transfer skills to government implementation structures.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) outlines the scope of work of the ISPs and provides guidance on information for submission of proposals.

D. SCOPE OF WORK

The ISP will be responsible for providing technical and operational support to the MBSSE district level implementation structures. The ISP will help to build required capacity and skills transfer before the program is fully operated by the government without any external support.

Specifically, ISPs will be expected to perform the following roles (among others):

- i. Conduct activities required to prepare schools for the successful launch of the program. This includes:
 - a. Collecting information to assess school readiness for the program.
 - b. Procuring assets that may be required to implement the program. These assets include electrical accessories such as extension cables, mats for sitting on, and handwashing stations.
 - c. Organising and conducting teacher training.
 - d. Organising and conducting community sensitization meetings with parents and local stakeholders.
 - e. Engaging local government education authorities for awareness and support.
- ii. Support District Education Officers in preparing schools for successful launch through development, organisation, and provision of training for staff at district, and school level on key monitoring processes including to:
 - a. Collaborate with district officers to establish enrollment patterns, focusing on a number of streams in each Primary 1-4, the number of learners per class in each grade, the number of teachers available for each stream, and the number of classes in each grade.
 - b. Support schools in reviewing and revising existing timetables according to guidance from MBSSE on how to integrate the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** into the school's timetable.
 - c. Share details of installation needs and required work for successful installation with the relevant Technical Service Providers (TSPs).
 - d. Collaborate with ward officers and the local school authorities to plan and implement community engagement including 1) sensitization meetings with parents and local school stakeholders on the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** to garner local ownership and support; 2) strengthening the capacity of Parent-Teacher support groups, and community leaders to enhance student attendance and sustainability of the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** at the school.
 - e. Coordinate with Technical Service Providers (TSPs) and district education officers about the setup of technology in the schools including the delivery of tablets and the installation of solar and cages.
 - f. Work with the ICT Technical Leads and technical officers to test all installed equipment including tablets, solar chargers, and batteries. Ensure that the tablets are charging well and that the software is running efficiently on the tablets ahead of the launch.

- iii. Plan and provide capacity building to District Education Officers on the program facilitation, implementation, quality monitoring tools, data collection processes, and program dashboard usage.
 - a. Ensure technical support is available for schools.
 - b. Collaborate with Education Officers to establish a routine for regular supervision and data collection in each school every week and monitor the implementation of the set routines.
 - c. Collaborate with the Education Officers responsible for schools in selected districts to develop and deliver a training program for local school technical support, **Digital Foundational Learning Program** lesson facilitation procedures, program implementation quality monitoring, and use of dashboards to track program implementation.
 - d. Oversee school-level training and engagement meetings with education officers and provide support as required.
 - e. Support district level capacity development to ensure schools are visited regularly to monitor implementation progress, identify existing challenges, and provide solutions to identified problems.
 - f. Collaborate with Education Officers and schools in organising monthly review meetings with teachers and members of school committees to discuss and resolve any challenges encountered in the implementation.
 - g. Support Education Officers in collecting data, transmitting/uploading data onto the dashboards, and sharing key monitoring lessons with schools and local committees in the schools.
- iv. Take part in the overall **Digital Foundational Learning Program** monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) processes.
 - a. Visit schools at least four times a month to monitor implementation progress, identify existing challenges, and provide solutions to identified problems.
 - b. Collect data to support program monitoring and share key monitoring lessons with schools and local committees in schools.
 - c. Meet with Imagine Worldwide weekly to identify and implement opportunities to improve project implementation based on monitoring data.
 - d. Organise and facilitate monthly review meetings with teachers and members of school committees to discuss and resolve any challenges encountered in the implementation.
 - e. Provide regular reports to Imagine Worldwide on the status of implementation, including identification of any critical challenges and suggestions for possible solutions.
- v. Ensure Transitioning is well planned and implemented so that the required capacity is built among key stakeholders before disengaging from the assigned schools at the end of the period of regular support to government structures.

E. GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

During the 2025/2026 academic year, the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** will be implemented in 750 primary schools spread across eleven districts. The district and total number of schools in each district is presented in the table below:

District	Total School
Falaba	64
Kenema	76
Bo	74
Kailahun	98
Moyamba	100
Karene	102
Koinadugu	56
Bonthe	54
Port Loko	88
Tonkolili	76
Western Area Urban	102

ISPs with demonstrated capacity to implement activities outlined above will, at minimum, have organisational presence or established relationships in one or more of the regions. Ideally, an ISP will have a presence in one of the selected districts. An ISP may be allocated a district if there is no capacity identified to cover certain districts in a region. ISPs are therefore encouraged to indicate regions they have worked in historically, and in which they have relationships with local education authorities.

F. STAFFING SUPPORT

Imagine Worldwide will provide funding for additional staff should such a requirement be needed. Staffing support will be provided for:

1. One full-time dedicated Project Manager who is responsible for day-to-day management of the project. Their duties will include but not be limited to:
 - a. Ensure all project milestones and deliverables are fulfilled according to the project plan
 - b. Communication and weekly check-ins with Imagine Worldwide as the primary point of contact
 - c. Coordinating procurement of local items according to the ISPs procurement policies and procedures
 - d. Hiring, training, and managing other project staff in collaboration with Imagine Worldwide

- e. Support project staff to troubleshoot implementation issues and ensure that schools achieve the target time-on-task
2. Field Officers, who will each be responsible for 5 schools each in the 2025/2026 academic year cohort Their duties will include but not be limited to:
 - a. Visit each school at least once a week to monitor implementation, collect monitoring data, and provide support as needed
 - b. Organise and facilitate teacher trainings and community engagement meetings
 - c. Troubleshoot implementation issues to ensure that schools achieve the target time-on-task
 3. One Technical / IT specialist, whose duties will include but not be limited to
 - a. Register and set-up all tech equipment
 - b. Provide technical support in case of issues with hardware or software
 - c. Liaise with Imagine Worldwide IT team for quick resolution of issues

G. DELIVERABLES

ISPs will be responsible for ensuring the following deliverables are met. Payments will be deliverable based.

Deliverable	Frequency
1. Learning Activity	
a. School timetable has required minutes of scheduled tablet-learning time per stream in each Primary Level	Per Term
b. Achieve required minutes of tablet-learning time per individual child per week	Per Term
c. Integration of Digital Foundational Learning Program in routine work plans and reports of local education authorities	Per Term
2. Organisation Communication and Reporting	
a. Attendance to meetings between Program Manager & team, and Imagine Worldwide with satisfactory preparation and contribution	Per Term
b. Staffing Field Officers with a maximum of 10 schools per field officer in order to support effective monitoring	Per Term
c. Submission of obligatory financial reports (i.e. Quarterly Financial Report, Annual Financial Report, Final Financial report for the entire Grant period)	Quarterly Annually

d. Submission of Term Progress reports and Annual Progress Reports	Per Term
3. Provision of Assets, Equipment and Hardware	
a. Inventory stock-takes completed in selected schools, covering all major asset categories (tablets, power units, headsets, etc.) each term, and revised inventory allocation data shared with Imagine Worldwide and confirmed to be accurate	Per Term
b. Inventory stock takes report on breakage and loss rates of major assets (i.e. tablets, power units) are sustainable, i.e. that schools have sufficient assets in good condition to achieve time-on-task objectives	Per Term
4. Trainings and Community Sensitizations	
a. Selected schools receive required teacher trainings, with sufficient teacher attendance in each round of trainings, and satisfactory post-training reviews	To be Determined (TBD)
b. Selected school communities receive required community sensitizations, with sufficient attendance per session	TBD
5. School Monitoring Visits and Data Collection	
a. Monitoring visits to schools during the school term, confirmed with timely survey report submissions within 2 business days of each visit, using the tools provided by Imagine	Monthly
b. Ensure supporting infrastructure in place to support remote tablet usage reporting	TBD
c. Tablet data collected from tablets for specified time periods (90% of tablets reporting data each term)	Per Term
6. School Assessments	
a. Baseline student assessments conducted in selected schools with sufficient student coverage, in both numeracy and literacy, using tools and processes as defined by Imagine Worldwide	TBD
b. Endline student assessments conducted in selected schools with sufficient student coverage, in both numeracy and literacy, using tools and processes as defined by Imagine Worldwide	TBD

H. CONTRACTING PERIOD

ISPs will be contracted annually. ISPs will proceed with the program based on performance and continued interest. Every year, each ISP will be duly assessed based on a set criterion in line with scope of work, quality of deliverables, and minimum requirements set out below.

I. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ISP

ISPs for the **Digital Foundational Learning Program** will be expected to meet the following minimum requirements:

1. To be a duly registered Local Organization with a demonstrated clean track record of implementing various development programs in Sierra Leone for a period of over five years. Previous programming should include work in the education sector. In the case of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), they must be duly registered with the NGO Desk and fully compliant with existing NGO law.
2. To have strong leadership and governance arrangements including a functioning governing board with strong systems and procedures in place including human resources, financial management, and program management.
3. To have demonstrated strong programming and technical capacity (designing and implementing quality programs) in areas of monitoring, evaluation, good practices replication, and reporting.
4. To have demonstrated strong financial management systems and procedures including audited accounts for the past 3 years.
5. To have a strong program implementation presence (preferably education programs) in the region of choice (minimum of one district) with demonstrated capacity to provide technical support to the Government.
6. The ability to submit high quality and timely routine monitoring, narrative, and financial reports in line with agreed reporting schedules.

All organisations interested in becoming an ISP are required to demonstrate the minimum requirements in their submission of the Proposal.

J. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Interested organisations should submit a Proposal to Imagine Worldwide. The Proposal should include the following information:

- a. Executive Summary: A brief overview of the organisation and its qualifications.
- b. Experience and Qualifications: Information on the organisation's experience in similar projects and the qualifications of key personnel.
- c. Technical Proposal/Operational Plan: Detailed description of the approach and methodology for delivering the scope of work, including outline of the operational support plan, logistics, and coordination.

- d. Geographical reach: Indication of the regions (and districts where applicable) that your organisation would be prepared to implement the program.
- e. Budget: Detailed budget breakdown, including all costs associated with implementation of the scope of work.
- f. References: Contact information for at least three references from previous clients.

Additional guidance on each of the sections is provided in Annex A. All required information should be submitted in a single document (i.e. do not separate the budget from the rest of the proposal). **Proposals should not exceed 15 A4 pages.** Organisations need only submit one proposal for consideration.

K. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a. Experience and Qualifications: The organisation's experience in working in primary education, in facilitating training and community engagement, and the qualifications of key personnel. Experience in implementation of technology-based programs will be beneficial.
- b. Technical Capacity: The approach and methodology the organisation seeks to use in ensuring optimum execution of duties.
- c. Cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget.

L. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals must be submitted via this [link](#) by **May 5 before midnight.**

M. CONTACT INFORMATION

For any questions or clarifications, please contact:

Name: Aba Amegatcher, Global Programs & Systems Manager Imagine Worldwide

Email: aba.amegatcher@imagineworldwide.org

N. ANNEX A: PROPOSAL CONTENTS GUIDANCE

The template below provides guidance on the contents to include in the proposals. Organisations may provide additional information to support their application. Proposals must, however, remain within the 15 page limit.

Section		Description
1	Organisation Information	<i>Provide basic details about your organisation</i>
	Organisation Name	
	Contact Person	
	Contact Email	
	Contact Phone Number	
	Organisation Address	
	Website	
2	Executive Summary	<i>Provide a brief overview and qualifications</i>
	Brief Overview of the Organisation	
	Key Qualifications	
3	Experience and Qualifications	<i>Detail relevant project experience and information on key personnel</i>
	i. Project Implementation	
	Has your organisation implemented projects based in primary education in Sierra Leone?	
	Please describe the type of projects you have implemented in relation to primary education: Project Name Project Objectives Project Outcomes Your role in relation to this proposal Project Client/Partners Project Funder(s) (if applicable)	
	Please describe relevant Education Technology (EdTech) projects that have been implemented by your organisation. Specify: a. Whether these projects were internally driven (initiated and led by your organisation) or development partner-driven (initiated, funded, or led by an external donor or partner). b. The scope, scale and objectives of each project and the primary outcomes achieved.	
	Please provide key lessons you have learned with regard to implementing projects in primary education and/or	

Section		Description
	Education Technology in Sierra Leone	
	Please describe the manner in which your organisation approaches community engagement with specific stakeholders (government authorities, teachers, parents, other community stakeholders such as faith leaders)	
	Please share any lessons you have learned about engaging key stakeholders in the community / region / country.	
	ii. Staffing	
	Provide details on the human resources your organisation can leverage to support implementation of the program. Please indicate whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. organisation staff provide training for education stakeholders such as teachers or local government authorities b. staff periodically visit schools c. staff lead community engagement activities. Where applicable, explain the strategies or mechanisms used by staff.	
	Please provide names and positions, and qualifications of key personnel who will be engaged in the program.	
	lii. Governance	<i>Provide details of the governance structure, the individuals on the Board, and the Executive Staff</i>
	Who forms part of your organisation's Board? (Individual names and professions)	
	Where are the Board members based (country?)	
	Who are the executive staff in the organisation? (Individual names and professions)	
	iv. Government relations	
	Has your organisation ever signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Sierra Leone? Provide details on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ministry, Department or Agency name b. MoU validity (timeframe) c. Any other partners included in the MoU 	<i>Provide details on the Ministry, Departments or Agencies that your organisation has signed MoUs with.</i>

Section		Description
	Does your organisation currently have an MoU with the Government of Sierra Leone?	
	v. Policies	
	Please indicate whether your organisation has the following policies: a. Child safeguarding policy b. Governance policy c. Anti-corruption policy d. Conflict of interest policy	
4	Technical Proposal/Operational Plan	<i>Detail relevant project experience and information on key personnel</i>
	i. Approach and Methodology	<i>Outline the strategy and methods that will be used to deliver the scope of work</i>
	What are the key steps and phases in the implementation process?	
	How will the tablets be distributed?	
	What approach will be used to train teachers?	
	How will you organise community sensitization?	
	What methodologies will be used to ensure quality and efficiency?	
	ii. Operational Support Plan	<i>Detail the plan for providing ongoing support during implementation</i>
	How will technical support be provided to schools and students?	
	What coordination mechanisms will be in place with schools and local authorities?	
	iii. Risk Management	<i>Identify potential risk and outline mitigation strategies</i>
	What are the key risks associated with a tablet-based program such as the Learning Program ?	
	What measures will be taken to mitigate these risks?	

Section		Description
	How will risks be monitored and managed throughout the project?	
5	Geographical Reach	<i>Provide details on regions and districts in which your organisation has implemented programs</i>
	Please list the regions in which you have implemented education-based programs	
	Please list the districts in which you have implemented education-based programs	
	Please list the regions in which you would like to implement the program (select up to three in order of preference)	Manyara
		Morogoro
		Ruvuma
		Shinyanga
		Tabora
		Zanzibar
6	Budget	<i>Provide a total budget and details cost breakdown</i>
	Total Budget	
	Cost Breakdown for each aspect of the program	
	How will the budget be managed and monitored?	
7	References	<i>Provide details of 3 references/clients</i>
	Client Name	
	Address	
	Project Name	
	Year of Engagement	
	Duration of Engagement	
	Contact Name	
	Contact E-mail Address	
	Contact Phone Number	

