



**AMBASSADE
DE FRANCE
EN AFRIQUE DU SUD,
AU LÉSOTHO
ET AU MALAWI**

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Study on the relevance, effectiveness, coherence and adequacy of interventions for the prevention of unintended early pregnancy in South Africa and Malawi

1. Rationale

The Embassy of France in South Africa is inviting bids for a study aimed at assessing the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and adequacy of interventions to prevent early and unintended pregnancy in South Africa and Malawi.

The prevalence of unintended pregnancy amongst adolescent girls remains high in both countries, despite a multitude of stakeholders involved and interventions rolled out to attempt to prevent and manage these situations. Therefore it appears useful to reflect on the relevance, effectiveness, coherence and adequacy of the interventions deployed, as well as the volume of resources dedicated to prevention.

This study will be commissioned to generate much-needed factual and analytical information about existing prevention interventions, so as to inform decision-making and future programming by stakeholders concerned (governments, civil society, etc.)

This study falls under a framework cooperation programme funded by the Embassy of France in South Africa, Lesotho and Malawi in 2022-2023, to support the strengthening of the prevention of unintended early pregnancy in South Africa and Malawi. The programme consists of three work streams and activities, including research, intended to add value and complement existing interventions, as described in Annexure 1.

The study will be commissioned to a research organisation in South Africa and/or Malawi.

These Terms of Reference (ToR) spell out the expectations for the study.

2. Brief presentation of the project

The framework cooperation programme *“Strengthening of the prevention of unintended early pregnancy in South Africa and Malawi”* stems from France’s commitment as global leader of the Generation Equality Action Coalition on Bodily Autonomy and Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health (SRHR), and responds to Malawi and South Africa’s key concern for the prevention and management of unintended early pregnancy.

Indeed, unintended early pregnancy is a protracted issue in light of the statistics. An average of 120,000 girls and adolescents under the age of 18 become pregnant each year in South Africa, and 80,000 in Malawi. Children born to teenage mothers account for 13% and 35% of births in these two countries respectively. 29% of 15-19 year-old girls in Malawi have been pregnant at least once. On top of being a posing health risks for both the mother and the child, pregnancy among adolescent girls has social, economic and psychological implications that affect their educational and future opportunities, and hinders progress towards gender equality.

The multiplicity of factors driving early pregnancy, and the complexity of a standardized response, partly explain this situation. Studies suggest that existing interventions do not sufficiently take into account the

contextual specificities and the lived realities of the young people concerned. Policy and programme implementation also seems to be lagging. Last but not least, there seems to be a lack of a holistic and coordinated strategy to tackle the problem effectiveness.

This framework programme aims to contribute to the prevention of unintended early pregnancy among adolescent girls in South Africa and Malawi. To this end, the programme's three work streams are designed to strengthen existing prevention mechanisms and interventions, to foster the exchange and upscaling of best practices between Malawi, South Africa and France, and contribute to building partnerships between actors committed to tackling the issue:

- *Work stream 1:* Support the identification and exchange of expertise on early pregnancy prevention approaches in South Africa and Malawi.
- *Work stream 2:* Foster better stakeholder consultations on adolescent and youth SRHR, and greater youth participation in the design of early pregnancy prevention strategies
- *Work stream 3:* Strengthen prevention programmes and capacities in and around schools.

The research conducted under the first work stream, will inform activities in the other two work streams. The active participation of young people in all activities will be prioritized.

3. Purpose of the study

The unabated – if not increasing – number of cases of unintended pregnancy amongst adolescent girls in South Africa and Malawi, despite a multitude of stakeholders involved and interventions rolled out in both countries, raises three questions:

- i/ the effectiveness of prevention approaches and interventions;
- ii/ the effectiveness of their articulation/coordination; and
- iii/ the adequacy of interventions and resources mobilized to deal with the issue.

This study therefore aims to **reflect on the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and adequacy of the prevention interventions deployed in both countries.**

It will serve the following objectives:

- A. Identify existing prevention interventions in South Africa and Malawi.
- B. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and adequacy of interventions aimed at preventing unintended early pregnancy in South Africa and Malawi.
- C. Draw practical recommendations to improve the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and adequacy of the prevention interventions deployed in both countries.

4. Scope

The scope of the study is as follows:

- The study will cover two countries, *South Africa* and *Malawi*, and collect and analyse information at all relevant levels of intervention (national, provincial / district, local).

It is however acknowledged that the research may not be exhaustive due to time, resource, and data availability constraints. The research report will clearly state any scope restrictions in that regard, including any sampling methodology used, as applicable.

- The study will focus on the *prevention of unintended early pregnancy*, understood as a pregnancy that occurs to an adolescent girl between 10-19 years old who was not planning to have any (more)

children, or that was mistimed in that it occurred earlier than desired, and regardless of whether the pregnancy is carried to term or not (termination, miscarriage, etc)¹.

By *prevention*, one means a deliberate undertaking aimed at stopping unintended early pregnancy from happening. As such, the study will not consider undertakings aimed at managing situations from the moment an adolescent girl has fallen pregnant.

- Will be considered any *current* policies, plans, programmes and interventions by government, civil society or other development partners, intentionally designed to contribute to preventing unintended early pregnancy in South Africa and Malawi.
- The study will consider *any sector and determinants* (sociocultural, economic, environmental) that may have a positive or negative bearing on unintended early pregnancy occurring in South Africa and Malawi.
- The study will give precedence to *the views and inputs of young people*, particularly adolescents aged 10-19, as well as young women who have experienced one or more unintended early pregnancy. Indeed, the youth ought to be involved in any process aimed at designing or assessing prevention undertakings intended to benefit them, to ensure that they are relevant to their needs and views, and adequate.

Due consideration will be paid to guidelines and restrictions pertaining to conducting research with children (under 18) applicable in South Africa and Malawi.

5. Services requested

A. Identify existing prevention interventions in South Africa and Malawi:

- Establish a (non-exhaustive) inventory of prevention policies / plans / programmes / interventions that are currently rolled out in South Africa and Malawi – be it by government, civil society or other development partners –, categorized by sector and region of implementation.

B. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and adequacy of interventions aimed at preventing unintended early pregnancy in South Africa and Malawi:

Using literature review, meta-analysis as applicable, interviews with stakeholders and concerned parties, as well as the findings of the inventory, the researcher(s) will:

- Document what adolescent girls most at risk of unintended early pregnancy identify as their main needs and key levers to prevent or reduce their vulnerability in that regard;
- Assess the relevance and effectiveness – in design and in implementation – of the various types of interventions to address:
 - i. the determinants of unintended early pregnancy; and
 - ii. the needs of the adolescent girls most at risk of unintended early pregnancy.

Specific attention to be paid to:

- i. the roll-out of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) (in and out of school);
- ii. interventions focusing on the economic vulnerabilities that contribute to unintended early pregnancies (e.g. in relation but not limited to, transactional sex); and
- iii. support systems for adolescents in the school environment (e.g. social workers' interventions).

The research will seek to pull out the key factors that may influence effectiveness.

Lessons learned from past or ongoing interventions shall be considered.

¹ Based on the definition of unintended early pregnancy provided in the UNFPA *State of World Population 2022*, p.6.

- Assess the adequacy and coherence of existing programmes and interventions, and identify possible gaps and opportunities to improve adequacy and coherence.

When assessing *relevance*, *effectiveness*, *coherence*, and *adequacy*, the research will consider the following:

- By *relevance*, one means the degree to which a type of intervention does address the determinants (vulnerability factors, drivers, etc) of unintended early pregnancy, and meets the specific needs of adolescent girls to prevent such situation.
- By *effectiveness*, one means the extent to which a specific type of intervention appears to be having the desired effect on preventing unintended early pregnancy.
- By *coherence*, one means:
 - i. the manner in which the various interventions are coordinated and/or logically distributed and/or articulated with one another; and
 - ii. whether the interventions by the South African and Malawian governments are consistent with their national and international commitments.
- By *adequacy*, one means the extent to which the interventions taken together appear to be sufficient for the purpose of reducing the prevalence of unintended early pregnancy to a satisfactory level.²

C. Draw practical recommendations:

- to improve the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and adequacy of prevention interventions;
- on the potential for scaling up the types of interventions which are found to be the most relevant and effective.

6. Process and deliverables

The research will follow a 3-stage process, with deliverables as detailed below.

All deliverables will be submitted by email to the Embassy's Attaché for Development Cooperation, who will share them with the Advisory Committee.

The researcher(s) will consider the feedback and comments received without prejudice to their independence.

6.1. Inception

This stage will serve to:

- a) clarify the expectations of the Embassy of France and Advisory Committee, the scope of the study, timelines and benchmarks, etc;
- b) specify the methodology, protocols and research questions.

- **Inception meeting** between the research(s) and the Advisory Committee.
This meeting will serve to introduce the research project more in details and share any documentation and contact details needed.
- **Inception report.**
In this report, the researcher(s) will recall the context and purpose of the research; list out the research questions, and detail the methodology and tools / means to collect the data; specify

² To be assessed against targets such as set in Sustainable Development Goals, Target 3.7.2; SADC Regional Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) 2019–2030 and SADC Scorecard; national targets; Global Strategy for Women's Children's And Adolescents' Health 2016-2030, Implementation In The African Region (AFR/RC66/9); Maputo Plan Of Action 2016-2030; Campaign for accelerating the reduction of maternal mortality in Africa (CARMMA); Agenda 2063 of the African Union; ESA Commitment; etc.

An assessment of whether these targets are in themselves satisfactory and ambitious enough may also be provided.

the schedule for data collection, including field visits if any; and provide a tentative list of stakeholders to be interviewed (in-person or through calls / online communications).

The researcher (s) will submit a draft inception report to the Embassy's Attaché for Development Cooperation, who will share with the Advisory Committee for review and feedback. The researcher(s) may be requested to consider submit a revised version taking into account the feedback received.

6.2. Data collection and analysis

During this stage, the researcher(s) will collect the data needed according to the research objectives and questions. This will be done through a literature review, interviews and field visits, as appropriate.

- **Draft research report** (max. 50 pages, excluding annexures).
The draft report will include the components listed at section 5, and an outline of the work remaining and timeline.

6.3. Final research report

This stage will allow the Evaluator(s) to finalise their analysis, draw the conclusions and formulate recommendations.

- **Final research report** (max. 80 pages, excluding annexures).
The final report will be structured as follows:
 - Cover sheet
 - Table of content
 - List of acronyms
 - Executive summary (2 to 5 pages)
 - Literature review
 - Methodology
 - Inventory of prevention policies / plans / programmes / interventions
 - Results / findings of the research
 - Analysis
 - Conclusions
 - Recommendations
 - Annexures: references; list of stakeholders interviewed and field visits conducted; data collection instruments.

The research report will be the property of the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and the research agency. The final research content may be communicated, published or used freely, with proper referencing.

- **Close-out meeting** with the Advisory Committee.
This meeting will allow the researcher(s) to present the findings of the research to the Advisory Committee, and provide an opportunity to discuss the conclusions and recommendations.

7. Methodology

7.1. Key principles

The study methodology shall be underpinned by the following principles:

- Impartiality and independence of the research from the commissioning agency (Embassy of France in South Africa) and from stakeholders consulted;
- Credibility of the study, through the use of appropriately skilled and independent experts and the transparency of the research process, including dissemination of results to the relevant stakeholders;
- Meaningful participation of a diversity of relevant stakeholders in the research, to ensure that a diversity of perspectives and views are taken into account. In particular, the study will give precedence to the views and inputs of young people, particularly adolescents aged 10-19, as

well as young women who have experienced one or more unintended pregnancy during their teenage years.

- Usefulness of the study findings and recommendations, through timely presentation of relevant, clear and concise information to stakeholders concerned;
- Protection of children (under 18) and do-no-harm in the course of the research, especially when gathering sensitive information. The researcher(s) will abide by the applicable guidelines and restrictions pertaining to conducting research with children in South Africa and Malawi.

7.2. Methodology

The specifics of the methodology and specific research questions shall be proposed by the researcher(s).

The study will be carried out using primary and secondary research – literature review, meta-analysis, interviews (phone / in-person) – as relevant and as permitted by the budget. The proposed methodology for the study will be presented to the Embassy of France in an inception report.

Bidders are requested to explain the kind of information (qualitative / quantitative) they propose to collect for the various aspects of the study, and how they propose to collect it, based on limitations regarding data availability, accessibility, as well as geographic and time constraints.

8. Management

This study is commissioned by the Cooperation and Cultural Action Department (SCAC) of the Embassy of France in South Africa, Malawi and Lesotho. The SCAC will be the focal point for any planning, implementation and administrative matters pertaining to the study.

The Embassy will convene an Advisory Committee, whose role will be to select the researcher(s), and provide insights and feedback on the research questions and findings of the study, without prejudice to the independence of the researchers.

9. Tentative timeline

The study will be carried out between 1st of September and 31st of December 2022.

The tentative timeline is as follows:

Deadline for submission of tenders	7 th of August 2022
Selection and award of contract	1 st of September 2022
Inception meeting	Beginning September 2022
Close-out	January-February 2023

10. Additional information for bidders

- Further information about the project may be obtained from the SCAC. Requests should be addressed by email to warda.ouzemmal@diplomatie.gouv.fr **by 28th of July 2022**.
- The researcher(s) should have knowledge and experience in the following areas:
 - Experience conducting research on social and human sciences topics;
 - Experience with the study subject, and programme / project evaluation, would be a plus;
 - Experience conducting (field) research South Africa and/or Malawi;
 - Demonstrated ability to conduct research with a diversity of stakeholders. Experience conducting research with children would be a plus;

- Good communication skills, both orally and in writing;
- Excellent English writing and oral skills. Any other South African or Malawian languages, a plus.

11. Bidding process and how to apply

Interested candidates must submit the following documents/ information to demonstrate their qualifications:

- Technical proposal (max. 20 pages)
 - Explain their understanding of the work and deliverables,
 - Provide a brief methodology on how they will approach and conduct the work, including a tentative schedule;
 - Explain why they are the most suitable to conduct the research.
- Financial proposal, based on the template in Annexure 2.
- CV of all lead researcher(s), highlighting past experiences in similar research projects.
- At least 2 references.

Interested candidates are requested to submit an electronic copy of their expression of interest/ proposal with the subject REF: “Study on the prevention of unintended early pregnancy – [name of Bidder]”.

Applications must be submitted to warda.ouzemmal@diplomatie.gouv.fr by 7th of August 2022.

12. Contract award criteria

Description		Weight
Technical criteria		
a	Experience conducting research on social and human sciences topics	20
b	Experience conducting (field) research South Africa and/or Malawi	10
c	Demonstrated ability to conduct research with a diversity of stakeholders, including with children	5
d	Experience with the study subject, and programme / project evaluation	5
e	Adherence to ToR's specifications and related requirements, clear understanding of needs and deliverables.	20
f	Robustness and relevance of the methodology	10
g	Ability to deliver the research within the given timeline	10
h	Communication, writing skills and language proficiency	10
Commercial criteria		
i	Competitive fee rates and expenses in relation to the market and demonstration of value for money.	10
Total		100

ANNEXURES

Annexure 1 – Presentation of the framework cooperation programme

Annexure 2 – Financial proposal guidelines

Strengthening the prevention of unintended early pregnancy in South Africa and Malawi

GOAL

Contribute to strengthening the prevention of unintended early pregnancies in South Africa and Malawi

STAKEHOLDERS

South African and Malawian line departments: Health, Education, Social Development / Welfare, Gender

South African and Malawian civil society organisations & youth networks

French public institutions and civil society organisations

Development partners: UN agencies, European Union, cooperation agencies



WORK STREAMS AND ACTIVITIES | 2022 - 2023

Support the identification and exchange of expertise on early pregnancies prevention approaches

€127,000

Studies on the effectiveness of prevention approaches and programmes

Study of budget allocations to the prevention of unintended early pregnancies

Exchange of expertise between South Africa, Malawi and France

Technical expertise on “Care and Support in Schools” programmes

Foster better stakeholder consultations on adolescent and youth SRHR, and greater youth participation in the design of early Strengthen prevention programmes and capacities in and around schools.

€276,000

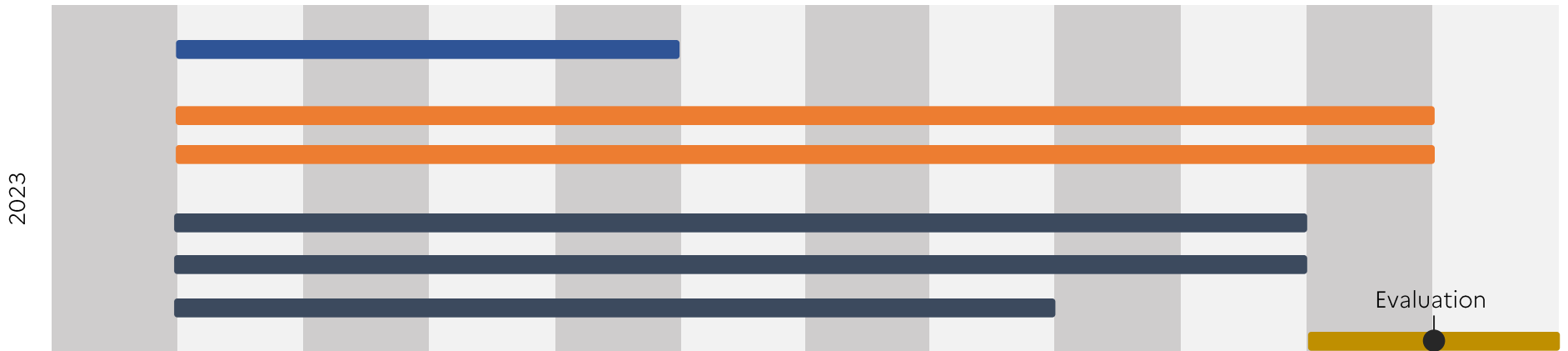
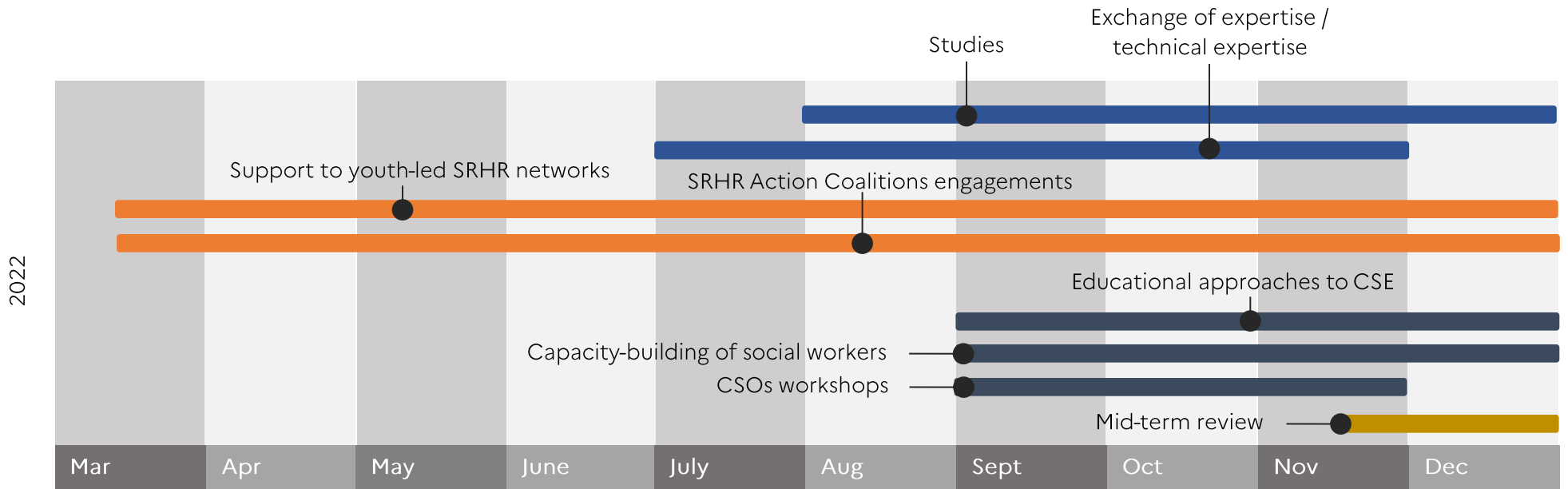
Support to youth-led SRHR networks in South Africa and Malawi

Foster multi-stakeholders consultation platforms on SRHR – Generation Equality Forum’s Action Coalitions on SRHR

Strengthening of training framework for Life Skill / Life Orientation teachers, and educational approaches to comprehensive sexuality education

Workshops with civil society organisations to strengthen their capacity to roll out impactful interventions

TIMELINE



ANNEXURE 2 – FINANCIAL PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Please provide the following information, as applicable:

	Researcher name 1	Researcher name 2	Researcher name 3		
Daily rate (in ZAR)					

Description	Number of days	Total nb of days	Amount (in ZAR)
1 – Inception phase			
Sub-total (1)			
2 – Data collection and analysis			
Sub-total (2)			
3 – Final submission			
Sub-total (3)			
4 – Other costs			
Sub-total (4)			
TOTAL			