

Senior Associate (Sierra Leone)

Location: Freetown

Salary: Competitive, localised

Contract: 12 months (with possible extension subject to funding and performance)

Hours: Full-time (37.5 hours per week)

Reporting to: Programme Manager

About the Education Partnerships Group (EPG):

Incubated within UK education charity, Ark, the Education Partnerships Group (EPG) is an international not-for-profit consultancy that partners with governments to shape and strengthen their education systems. Our vision is that governments in low and middle-income countries are equipped to ensure that every child goes to school and learns. We believe that supporting government to design and implement contextually relevant and evidence-based public policy is the best way to drive sustainable progress towards achieving quality education for all.

We assist governments across three critical stages of the policy process:

1. Generating and using research to inform policy
1. Supporting the design and development of policy
2. Supporting the piloting and scaling of policy reform initiatives

Today, EPG works in five countries in Sub-Saharan Africa: South Africa, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, and Zambia.

In our work, we prioritise a genuine understanding of context rather than assuming ideas can simply be transplanted from one country to another. We also focus on the system – the roles, responsibilities, and relationships of all the different actors – rather than working on one policy area in isolation.

COVID has demonstrated more than ever the importance of effective education systems capable of coordinating and targeting limited resources through evidence-based approaches for impactful education service delivery. With growing demand for our services, EPG is currently focused on seizing those opportunities to expand our footprint in current programme countries and new geographies.

Overview of the project

Education Partnerships Group (EPG) is a non-profit consultancy that supports governments in low and middle-income countries to shape and strengthen their education systems. EPG partners with governments to enable their decisions by generating and using research to ensure policy is informed by evidence, facilitating the design and effective implementation of policy, and advising on the piloting and scaling of new policy reforms.

EPG, in collaboration with the Education Workforce Initiative (EWI), have been supporting the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) in Sierra Leone with their policy reform agenda for over two years. Working closely with the Ministry's Operations Policy and Planning Pillar, the consortium focuses on strengthening the policy development process by ensuring compliance and coherence to standards and supporting the drafting and implementation of policies.

About the role:

EPG is looking for a highly motivated candidate, with excellent analytical, communication and problem-solving skills, and knowledge of education programming and policy to support the ongoing development of policies and guidelines, as well as the implementation of policies recently promulgated.

The candidate will support EPG work alongside the MBSSE to ensure that policies are carefully and thoughtfully developed and implemented across the country. This will require the ability to oversee, and quality assure the development of policy and policy guidelines and develop templates and training tools to roll out implementation, in consultation with the MBSSE.

The right candidate will be passionate about the role education plays in transforming lives and see this role as an opportunity to support the MBSSE strengthen the policy environment to ensure the delivery of free quality education to all children in Sierra Leone. This role is based in the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and will also require helping the Ministry coordinate with relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and development partners (World Bank, FCDO, etc).

Indicative responsibilities:

Working under the guidance of an EPG Programme Manager, often with tight deadlines:

- Supports the MBSSE to develop policies and policy guidelines and costed implementation plans through quality assuring and/or drafting policy documents.
- Supports the MBSSE to develop an implementation process (timelines, templates, roles and responsibilities, etc).

- Supports the development of communication and training/coaching plans, training toolkits, etc) in close collaboration with the MBSSE and EPG team to support the implementation of policies nationally.
- Supports evidence-based research to inform policy development and implementation.
- Maintains constructive relationships with stakeholders (government counterparts, partners, etc) in close collaboration with the EPG Programme Manager.
- Contributes to the writing of programme deliverables, such as donor reporting.
- Supports EPG Programme Manager with programme management tasks including monitoring and evaluation, work planning, financial management and donor reporting.
- Lead in developing and managing project risks
- Working with Research and Monitoring Manager, develop and maintain project Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework

Candidate requirements:

- A Master's Degree in Social Sciences (Law, Public Administration, Economics, Education, or related field).
- 4+ years of professional experience.
- Excellent policy analysis skills.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Proven ability to synthesise and analyse qualitative data.
- Experience in education policy and/or programming.
- Experience in project management including planning, monitoring and reporting.
- Exceptional organisational skills with excellent attention to detail.
- Strong stakeholder engagement skills including government counterparts, donors and implementing partners is desirable.
- Experience with the professional use of the Microsoft Office Suite (i.e. Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook)
- Strong written communications and presentation skills in English.
- Strong interpersonal skills with a sense of humility and willingness to work with diverse team members, often remotely.
- A commitment to improving education quality for all children.
- Commitment to EPG's core values
 - *Responsive* | we start from a place of "yes"
 - *Accountable* | we accept ownership and healthy conflict
 - *Rigorous* | we create and meet high expectations
 - *Inclusive* | we seek diversity of perspectives and experiences
 - *Respectful* | we are quick to listen and empathize

How to Apply:

Applicants should submit in a single document a cover letter (maximum 1 page) and CV (maximum 3 pages) to admin@epg.org.uk

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted on next steps.