



Ministry of Education, Science & Technology
New England, Freetown, Sierra Leone

1ST QUARTERLY REPORT

Leh Wi Learn: Improving secondary education

June 2017

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1 Summary of overall progress

The inception phase of the Leh Wi Learn programme concluded at the end of February 2017. DFID, in its Annual Review, assessed the programme as “meeting expectations” and was satisfied that “processes are in place to achieve the intended outputs” (SSEIP Annual Review, March 2017). The Honourable Minister of Education, on behalf of MEST, reviewed and approved the Inception Report and proposed implementation workplan in March 2017. This first Quarterly Report reviews progress during the quarter April to June 2017.

The main delivery objective for the quarter was to build on the programme set-up phase by **supporting MEST with additional technical and human resources to strengthen the frontline of reform – schools and districts**. Under the direction of MEST and with close involvement of Deputy Directors of Education (DDEs), 125 School Support Officers (SSOs) successfully went through the recruitment process to provide **in-school support to teachers in secondary schools across all districts**. In addition, one District Support Officer (DSO) per district was recruited to coordinate and monitor SSOs and to serve as an **additional resource to the District Education Office (DEO) under the leadership and direction of the DDE**.

The quarter coincided with an intensive phase of work on the Education Sector Plan (ESP) which was being updated in line with outcomes of a National Sector Review workshop in early April and as a critical input into MEST’s application for additional Global Partnership on Education (GPE) funding. The updated ESP is also important for sector performance monitoring as it is intended to generate **a new set of performance targets to signpost progress when the President’s Recovery Priorities (PRP) targets are phased out after June**. Leh Wi Learn funded five technical consultants to work on the ESP update over the course of the quarter.

MEST was proactive during the quarter in preparing itself for the imminent completion of the PRP programme. A post-PRP transition plan was launched and included a two-day Retreat supported by Leh Wi Learn. The Retreat was personally led by the Honourable Minister and included all principal MEST officials, Directors and Deputy Directors, and a selection of development partners. The outcomes of the Retreat are expected to directly influence the **organisational shape of MEST post-PRP, clarification of departmental mandates and relationships, and dissemination of an updated Service Charter** to enhance transparency and accountability in education service delivery.

The Office of the Coordinator successfully built on the national commissioning of new classrooms funded by DFID as part of the PRP programme by conducting a social mobilisation exercise in all districts. The quarterly exercise was spearheaded by Paramount Chiefs and reminded **local communities to stay focused on the agenda to decongest schools**. The forums were also used to **consult district level stakeholders on the draft ESP document**. Some logistical challenges experienced resulted in a constructive meeting between MEST, DFID and Leh Wi Learn management to clarify fiduciary restrictions and address how financial support through Leh Wi Learn can be better streamlined in future.

The first round of an ***annual learning assessment survey*** was conducted in a sample of 400 schools across all districts. The survey will establish the monitoring baseline for Leh Wi Learn interventions and provide MEST with empirical data each year to target quality improvements in secondary education.

There was considerable focus on recruitment and procurement during the quarter, as can be expected of a programme in its first implementation quarter and preparing for national rollout. There is a perception in the Ministry and Districts that Leh Wi Learn is setting up a parallel system. This is urgently being addressed based on clear instructions from the Honourable Minister. The Chief Education Officer (CEO) has been assigned oversight of Leh Wi Learn and is now working with the team to review all aspects of the programme and ensure alignment with MEST systems. Communication with DDEs on planned activities will henceforth be streamed through the office of the Director Inspectorate to ensure consistent messaging and integration with MEST priorities and processes. Terms of Reference for SSOs and DSOs are being reviewed by the CEO to clarify roles vis-a-vis DEO staff, avoid overlap and conflict, and establish that SSOs and DSOs work as a DEO resource under the continuing leadership and authority of the DDEs.

2 Programme progress by Output

Programme Output 1, “Keeping girls safe in school” is being implemented by UNICEF as the Girls Access to Education (GATE) programme. Key highlights during implementation of Outputs 2 – 5 during the quarter April to June 2017 are presented in the following sections.

2.1 Programme Output 2 – Improving learning conditions in secondary schools

The workplan objectives agreed with MEST in the March Inception Report for implementation during this quarter were:

1. Establish a programme of in-service continuous professional development centered on ‘teaching support officers’ for secondary school teachers and principals
2. Expand lesson plans (or similar teaching aids) to senior secondary school

2.1.1 Recruitment and piloting of School Support Officers for all districts (Objective 1)

The recruitment process was rigorous and aimed to identify the best available candidates for the sensitive SSO role. **DDEs, with support from the Leh Wi Learn team, drove the assessment and selection process in all districts.** At the end of the process, **selected candidates were approved by the Director of Inspectorate before their appointment could be confirmed.** The overall process involved a planning exercise in all 13 districts (excluding the Port Loko pilot district), submission of requests to DDEs for advertising, review and shortlisting of the best applications in conjunction with DDEs (345 candidates in total), running of the final round of interviews, and offers to the selected 115 candidates.

A total of 115 SSOs, excluding the 10 already in the Port Loko pilot, were recruited during the quarter. The number was determined in the light of the number of schools to be covered in each district, the need to achieve an acceptable balance between coverage and intensity of school visits, and the limitation of available resources. While this is an important step towards ensuring that schools receive support visits of good quality, an overall shortage in existing numbers of inspectors and supervisors continues to be an issue for MEST to address. **Efficient distribution of schools by SSO has been agreed with DDEs who are currently working on producing school clusters to be assigned to each SSO.**

The table below shows the indicative distribution of SSOs by district and ratios of teachers per SSO (private schools are excluded).

District	# Schools	# Maths & English teachers	# students	# hired SSOs	Teachers/SSO
Bo	87	482	29,445	12	40
Bombali	110	422	28,819	12	35
Bonthe	25	96	5,244	3	32
Kailahun	40	145	12,005	7	21
Kambia	63	264	14,468	7	38
Kenema	67	284	23,508	10	28
Koinadugu	40	163	11,680	6	27
Kono	68	268	18,828	8	34
Moyamba	52	215	10,533	7	31
Port Loko	120	428	26,850	11 ¹	39
Pujehun	20	81	5,338	3	27
Tonkolili	69	216	17,870	8	27
Western Rural	81	322	17,699	11	29
Western Urban	86	561	46,265	20	28
Overall	928²	3947	268,552	125	31

2.1.2 School Support Officer Pilot in Port Loko District (Objective 1)

It was important to pilot how SSOs would operate in districts so that lessons could be learned and the programme streamlined before rollout to all districts. Port Loko was identified as the pilot district and the ***DDE played a leading role in the design and implementation of the pilot.*** Training of 10 selected SSOs focused on improving the use of Lesson Plans by teachers in classrooms. The following table summarises key lessons from the Port Loko pilot and their intended application in the SSO rollout to all districts.

Port Loko SSO pilot programme	
Key lesson	Application in rollout
<p><u>SSO recruitment</u></p> <p>Involvement of DDE throughout SSO recruitment process ensured ownership and smooth execution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSOs will work alongside other DEO staff (supervisors, inspectors) and within schools under the purview of the DDE. Local capacity within DEOs will be built through role modelling how an efficient, rigorous and transparent recruitment process can be run. DDEs were kept fully informed, gave inputs (through regular meetings and phone calls), were responsible for collection of applications and confirmation of shortlists, participated in final selection round, and made offers to finalist candidates.
<p><u>SSO delivery model</u></p> <p>The role of SSOs is primarily to coach, mentor and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSOs will work as valuable touch points for collecting data and feedback, serve as conduits for action on

¹ 10 SSOs have currently been recruited for Port Loko with the option of recruiting a further SSO to improve the ratio of teachers to SSO

² Following a verification exercise by UNICEF, the number of schools is now believed to be 925 and the table will be updated accordingly

<p>monitor secondary school teachers, and provide light support to Principals and heads of departments</p>	<p>issues at school level, and increase engagement of teachers and Principals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the intention is for SSOs and supervisors to work closely together, the DDE in Port Loko approved that supervisors should focus on primary schools and SSOs on JSS to deploy highly scarce resources more effectively and minimise overlap • The experience of SSOs in the Port Loko pilot showed that a load of 8-10 school visits can be executed within a 2-week cycle with adjustments for school size and distance. This will substantially increase coverage of schools and intensity of visits when applied in all districts • Prioritising and clustering schools, and assigning them to SSOs must be carried out under the direction of the DDE for greater efficiency. Information from the field will be used to adjust school visit assignments over time
<p><u>Working with supervisors</u></p> <p>While the focus of this initial start-up phase has been on deploying SSOs at secondary school level, the clear objective remains to strengthen the supervisor cadre within DEOs</p>	<p>Working with supervisors during the pilot:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor school monitoring form was updated as a collaborative effort in the Port Loko DEO • Supervisors were trained as group on the use of the new form • Supervisors all received both group and 1-1 training on giving action-oriented recommendations in schools • Supervisor monthly reporting template was created at the request of the DDE • All DEO staff engaged monthly in the DEO meeting • Supervisors and SSOs held introductory meeting to clarify roles and responsibilities, and how they should work together (although this should have happened at the start) • For the rollout in all districts, SSOs and supervisors are to meet every month to discuss successes and challenges • SSOs were tasked to inform supervisors in their chiefdom of operational issues encountered during school visits (e.g. low teacher or pupil attendance). All SSOs and supervisors working in the same areas exchanged contact details • 3 supervisors selected as part of team of master trainers to provide content remediation support to teachers in Port Loko pilot
<p><u>Training and induction</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards for an effective school to focus school support work: i) teachers delivering high quality lessons, ii) supporting principals and heads of

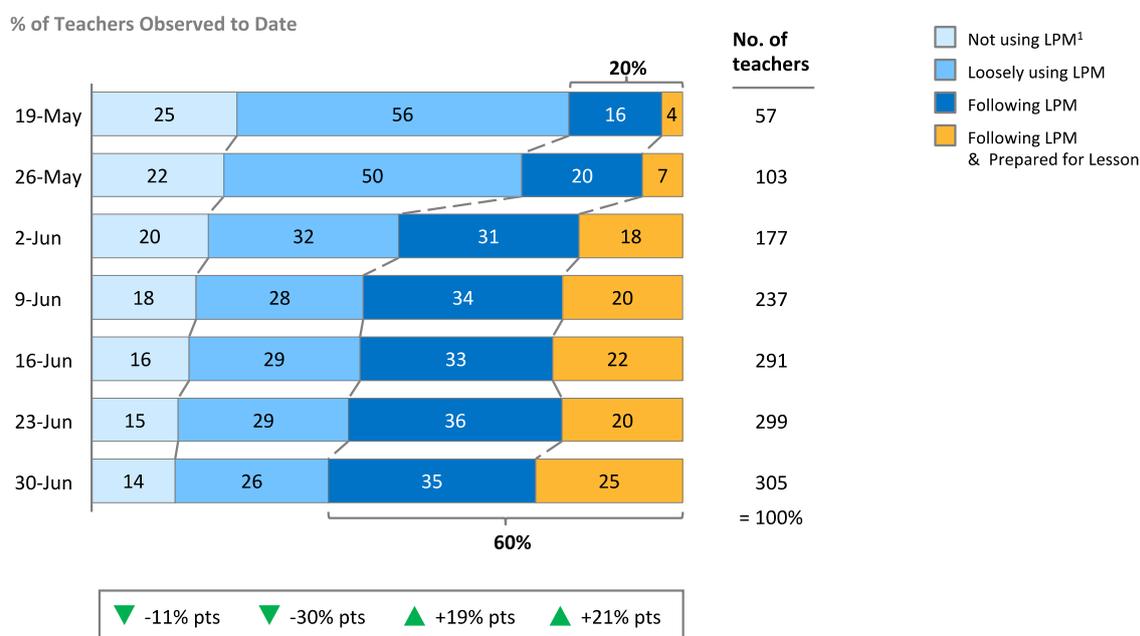
<p>Introducing all aspects of “an effective school” during induction training is key to sustainable, systemic change</p>	<p>departments within schools, and iii) school development planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although use of lesson plans is the current focus, more advanced pedagogical techniques, e.g. promoting positive classroom culture, time management, and use of additional materials and tools, should be introduced as part of continuing professional development of supervisors, inspectors and SSOs • A regular meeting of Principals important for building stakeholder understanding and buy-in for the SSO programme – DEO staff, communities, Paramount Chiefs or Councillors
<p><u>Scheduling school visits</u> Collecting and updating school schedule information improves planning and effectiveness of school visits and enables the DDE to carry out real-time monitoring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A weekly schedule template enables weekly planning and creates a clear record to give the DDE a real-time view of school monitoring. A key performance metric for SSOs will be visiting as many schools and teachers as possible • SSOs will support DEO planning by collecting information on school schedules – daily opening and closing times, when subjects are being taught, disruptive events observed, etc.
<p><u>Learning Circles</u> Learning and professional development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every week, SSOs come together at a location, as arranged by the DDE, to review successes and challenges and share information. A verbal and written summary of deliberations is presented to the DSO after the exercise for escalation to the DDE. The DDE is free to attend the LC at his convenience • The Learning Circle is proving to be a powerful medium for SSOs supporting each other and coming up with context-specific solutions to issues • Going forward, supervisors and inspectors will be introduced into Learning Circles as the foundation for establishing regular CPD
<p><u>Performance management</u> This is a key part of maintaining programme quality while continuing to develop SSOs professionally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day to day supervision and evaluation of SSOs is the responsibility of the DSO. However, this SSO management role of the DSO is within the context of the DEO and is, therefore, a support service to the DDE. • The SSO competency model (the performance evaluation framework) is based on 6 elements: effective engagement, content knowledge, collaboration, strong working relationship within DEO, strong relationship with teachers and principals, and fulfilment of basic responsibilities

Results from the pilot have been very encouraging and in a very short timeframe SSOs have seen improvements in school practices. Examples of these are a reduction in flogging, proactive engagement of principals in classroom observations or resolving issues, and, most importantly,

clear improvement in the frequency and quality of use of Lesson Plans amongst teachers. The graphic below summarises the initial results, as reported by the SSOs:



In 7 weeks, SSOs are already reporting **significant improvements in the use of lesson plan manuals in Port Loko (from 20% to 60% closely following LPMs)**



¹ Includes teachers who do not have LPMs
 Note: Cumulative observations with data reflecting for latest LPM use status observed for teacher

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2.1.3 SSS Lesson Plans and student study materials (Objective 2)

Lesson Plans for primary schools and JSS were distributed and teachers provided with basic training during the quarter. This work was led by IRC and funded by DFID. **Although there are gaps in the distribution to teachers, there is evidence that the LPMs are already improving teachers' classroom practice** (see figure above). A baseline learning assessment survey has been carried out to provide evidence on impact of LPM use on learning.

One important challenge to emphasize from the Port Loko pilot is the lack of LPMs among some teachers and schools (primary and JSS), thereby limiting the ability of the SSOs to perform their duties and realize the desired impact. After seven weeks of SSO engagement in Port Loko, escalation of the missing LPM issue to the DDE and working group, schools photocopying LPMs where possible, etc., as many as 9% of the JSS teachers visited still do not have the materials at hand. Reasons for the gap include teachers not attending the initial training, insufficient copies available at some trainings relative to the number of teachers attending, 'unverified' teachers receiving copies, etc. When scaling up the SSO model to the entire country at beginning of the next term, measures must be put in place to monitor and address this issue. The accelerated learning working group of MEST endorsed the **need to generate information on LPM distribution gaps in all districts through the network of supervisors and SSOs to understand the scale of the problem and consider appropriate and affordable solutions.**

The accelerated learning working group met during the quarter to review and endorse DFID's further support to schools, this time a proposal to **expand lesson plan provision to senior secondary schools (SSS)**. The proposal met with approval and a further working group session in the next quarter will fine-tune implementation plans. Given the more complex nature of lessons at SSS level, the final product of this exercise is envisaged as a composite Resource Pack including a comprehensive teacher guide and a supplementary student handbook. Working on behalf of MEST, IRC will again have responsibility for production and printing, whilst Leh Wi Learn will 1) support MEST to carry out technical review of drafts as they are produced and 2) support distribution and training using the national network of SSOs. The indicative timeframe for the exercise is July 2017 to February 2018.

2.2 Programme Output 3 – Strengthening MEST's capacity to plan, monitor and manage service delivery

The workplan objectives agreed with MEST in the March Inception Report for implementation during this quarter were:

1. Setting targets in line with updated Education Sector Plan (*the additional need to support the GPE application process drove implementation during the quarter*)
2. Support the delivery of PDT objectives to June 2017 (*and beyond given MEST's recent commitment to a post-PDT transition plan*)

2.2.1 ESP Mid-Term Review, Joint Sector Review and updating of the Education Sector Plan (Objective 1)

The Honourable Minister of Education directed MEST to urgently conduct an education sector review and a mid-term review of the 2014-2016 ESP, the output of which would inform a rapid education sector analysis and updating of the ESP document. ***The sector analysis and ESP update are requirements for a Global Partnership on Education (GPE) grant application which the Minister directed should be submitted in the November 2017 round.*** Leh Wi Learn mobilised technical assistance (deployed through five experienced national consultants) to carry out the foundational phase of the work under MEST direction, the ESP mid-term review (MTR) merged with a joint sector review (JSR), and subsequently drive the ESP updating process.

Finalisation of the updated ESP document will coincide with the end of the PRP period. It is anticipated that ***Recovery Targets within the PRP tracked weekly by MEST will be replaced by new sector performance targets derived from the ESP.*** The new ESP targets will need to be disaggregated to district level to enable monitoring at that level. This is a critical facet of MEST's post-PRP transition plan in the short term, and performance management in the sector driven by MEST prioritisation in the medium term.

2.2.2 Support to MEST Retreat (Objective 2)

The Honourable Minister approved and actively participated in a high level Retreat involving all senior MEST officials and DDEs during the quarter. The two-day event held at Eden Park in Kent proved to be a productive forum for some ***critical self-assessment and forward planning,***

particularly MEST’s organisational capacity to continue to address key reform targets beyond the conclusion of the PRPs in June.

The Minister led by example, encouraging an open review of the MEST Scheme of Service and Service Charter and deepening understanding of the 2010 MEST Policy and 2004 Education Act. Other critical subjects addressed include the relative roles and responsibilities of the Inspectorate and the TSC, and the transitioning of the former into a Quality Assurance directorate; progress made against PRP targets and MEST’s post-PRP transition plan, including public recognition of staff who had made telling contributions; and school feeding, focusing on the transition from MEST to JAM in 2018.

It is anticipated that key recommendations from the Retreat will be fully actioned by MEST in the coming quarter.

2.2.3 Support to Coordinator’s Office and MEST Internship programme (Objective 2)

At the request of the Deputy Minister, Leh Wi Learn is supporting the MEST Internship programme that was introduced in 2015 under the School Reopening Coordinator’s Office.³

The Coordinator, who is also Deputy Minister 1, directly supervises the 20 interns currently supported and described the internship programme as *“a bonding experience between the Coordination Office and Leh Wi Learn”*. During the quarter, some of the interns were given the opportunity to work on short assignments with the Leh Wi Learn team. The Coordinator evaluated this as a mutually beneficial experience: *“The opportunities for interns’ development is abounding and for ‘Leh Wi Learn’ getting acquainted with local content is quite appropriate”*.

Leh Wi Learn was asked to support a national social mobilisation exercise, a quarterly activity, that was organised by the Coordinator’s Office during the quarter. All 149 Paramount Chiefs across Sierra Leone were engaged to work with MEST officials to mobilise district level stakeholders in support of schools. This quarter’s exercise specifically built on the message of school decongestion following the successful national commissioning of new classrooms constructed with DFID funds. Administrative challenges were experienced in relation to payments to participants in the districts. A productive meeting involving MEST, DFID and Mott MacDonald was subsequently held on ways to avoid payment bottlenecks in future and a draft policy for payments has been developed.

2.3 Programme Output 4 – Strengthening district capacity to hold schools and teachers to account

The workplan objectives agreed with MEST in the March Inception Report for implementation during this quarter were:

1. Strengthen district supervision of schools
2. Enhance Situation Room data at the school level
3. Agree school-level action plans, linked to quality standards

³ Set up to address emergent need of getting 1.2m children back to a Safe Learning and Nurturing Environment.

2.3.1 District Support Officer (DSO) pilot in Port Loko district (Objectives 1, 2, 3)
Leh Wi Learn worked with the Director of Inspectorate to define the role and responsibilities of a DSO as well as plan their scope of work for the first few months in role. ***It is critical that the role of a DSO is fully embedded within the DEO under the leadership of the DDE for success in the mission to support improvement of schools.*** The Port Loko pilot was, therefore, designed with the DDE to introduce new tools and routines for effective service delivery, and to implement measures for building the capacity of DEO staff. This support included supporting the DDE to prepare a presentation ahead of monthly DEO meetings. Capacity building was also provided to existing supervisors and inspectors through coaching sessions as well as refinement and simplification of the supervisor forms used during school visits. Highlights of some key measures introduced include:

Agreed Tools

- A simplified Supervisor Form with the DDE/MEST to focus more on learning outcomes, align classroom observation questions with coaching research, and introducing a basic numeracy test to use in JSS and primary schools;
- Target areas for which performance would be measured with district and MEST, with initial focus on input-driven targets, e.g. number of schools visited by a supervisor per month, and a medium-term plan to move to output-driven targets;
- good practice guidance for supervisors when visiting schools, e.g. collecting the most common issues faced in schools and 10-20 best practice interventions for supervisors to draw from, focusing on immediate actions that supervisors can take without escalating, etc.

Routines

- Supporting the DDE in preparing for and facilitating the monthly DEO meeting, which includes analyses of data from supervisors and Situation Room monitors;
- Analysing Situation Room data with IT Officer to highlight common issues to the DDE and identify priority schools for supervisors to visit.

Capacity building activities

- Coaching supervisors on how to use the new tools and how to give action-oriented recommendations (to be supported in due course with one-to-one training);
- Awarding '***Supervisor of the Month***' to a supervisor who best performed on the agreed focus area for the month, e.g. February was the number of schools visited and March was the proportion of action-oriented recommendations provided to schools;
- Communicating message from the Director Inspectorate via a video recording stressing the need for openness to adoption of new tools.

2.3.2 Recruitment of DSOs (Objectives 1, 2, 3)

In consultation with the Director Inspectorate, the quarter focused on identifying and recruiting 14 DSOs, one for each district, to enable implementation of Output 4 objectives in all districts. The approach was agreed by MEST during the Inception period as a way of ***providing additional capacity to support DDEs and DEOs to support schools more effectively. The DSOs are to***

function under the leadership of DDEs and not to create parallel structures. A lot of attention during the quarter was given to planning and defining the recruitment process, including developing questions and tests to be used, reviewing 240 applications, shortlisting 100 of the best applications, running a computer test knowledge of Excel and PowerPoint, running the final round of interviews for 37 candidates, matching candidates to districts using their preferences and the DDE's input, and negotiating and giving offers to the selected 14 candidates. **All 14 recruited DSOs are Sierra Leoneans with the requisite qualifications and experience to become useful assets to DDEs.**

The inherent risk of creating a parallel structure in the deployment of DSOs will continue to be actively managed through: effective and consistent communication to emphasise the role of the DSO as **a support officer** with main engagement in supporting the team of School Support Officers (SSOs) to perform their daily duties; **reporting professionally to the DDE** who retains oversight of the DEO and provides direction; and **extending coaching and support of SSOs to supervisors and inspectors in their roles.** A meeting with all DDEs and Leh Wi Learn team is to be convened by the Director Inspectorate to clarify these roles and clear up misperceptions.

2.3.3 Transition plan for the Situation Room (Objective 3)

UNICEF currently supports the MEST Situation Room with its funding due to conclude at the end of June 2017. Joint consultation between MEST, Leh Wi Learn, UNICEF and the EU agreed a nine-month transition plan (July 2017 – March 2018) to enable ongoing generation of real-time data from the Situation Room while allowing more comprehensive planning around long term sustainability. The transition plan to be funded through the Leh Wi Learn budget was duly developed and approved by MEST through the Situation Room Working Group and the Permanent Secretary, although direct oversight is to be provided by the CEO going forward. MEST demonstrated concern for long term sustainability by committing to using the transition period to:

- Resolve the question of funding from April 2018, including whether it can find the resources to fund main cost drivers such as payment of monitors, as indications are that donors are unlikely to fund this after the transition period
- Work on a sustainable operational plan for the Situation Room driven by ongoing improvements to the quality and efficiency of reporting
- Develop a joined-up and comprehensive EMIS capable of supporting ESP monitoring (Technical Assistance from the EU will be available for overall EMIS assessment)
- Harmonise the resources of donors and partners to advance a common technical approach to EMIS development

2.4 Programme Output 5 – Improving system capacity for monitoring, learning and research

The workplan objective agreed with MEST in the March Inception Report for implementation during this quarter was:

1. Conduct an annual independent learning assessment

2.4.1 First annual secondary grade learning assessment (Objective 1)

The goal of Leh Wi Learn is to **improve learning outcomes at secondary education level**. A learning assessment survey is to be conducted annually to **provide MEST and other relevant stakeholders with robust data on levels of learning achievement in secondary grades in English and Mathematics**, and to track these annually for progress. The first round survey to establish the current state of learning achievement and a baseline for the programme was conducted during the quarter. The survey contains the following components:

- Pupil learning assessments for JSS2 and SSS2 grades, in English and Mathematics
- Principal's background questionnaire, including topics like provision of supportive supervision for teachers
- Teachers' background questionnaire, including topics like usage of lesson plans

The findings of the survey are to complement information derived from Sierra Leone's extensive examination system. While BECE and WASSCE examinations primarily focus on knowledge of the curriculum, **the survey test is based on the curriculum and focuses on learning outcomes and skills linked to the curriculum**.

Extensive contextualisation, validation and piloting of test questions was carried out to ensure the assessment questions were valid and reliable. This included: (i) review of items through consultations with secondary grade teachers of English and Mathematics, and (ii) an extensive pilot (approximately 500 students) and psychometric analysis of pilot data to assess item properties and ensure they are useful measures of what pupils know.⁴ In May, approximately 50 field supervisors and enumerators were trained in Freetown in interviewing and test administration techniques (especially using hand-held devices)⁵ in Freetown. A third and final field pilot was carried out in Bo, Kenema and Pujehun districts before commencement of fieldwork.⁶ Data collection started on 15 May and, as per schedule, was completed on 27 June covering 400 schools across 14 districts. In each school ten students were interviewed/tested (including up to two students with disabilities); and four teachers and one principal were interviewed. Multiple rounds of consultations with stakeholders within MEST were also carried out to secure institutional buy-in and support for the survey.⁷

The report of the learning assessment survey will be published early in the coming school year. Plans to disseminate findings, promote the use of the annual learning assessment results, and strengthen research and learning capacity within MEST will be reported on next quarter.

2.5 Management and Admin

The programme support staff continually review and update operational policies and procedures. As the programme evolves and new requirements emerge from experience on the

⁴Field activities were disrupted in April due to the unexpected nationwide closure of schools for voter registration. However, the data collection teams were able to approach and visit some secondary schools in Freetown which were holding revision classes for their students.

⁵ Called 'Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing' or CAPI.

⁶The rationale was to introduce trainees to 'real life' data collection scenarios in urban, peri-urban and rural settings.

⁷Within MEST key stakeholders included: Alhaji Kamara (Chief Education Officer), M.S. Sesay (Director of Inspectorate), Salimatu Koroma (Asst. Director of Secondary Education), Staneala Beckley (Chairperson, Teaching Services Commission), Adama Momoh (Director of Policy and Planning), Horatio Nelson-Williams (Director of Basic Education), Tamba Moseray (Lead, MEST Assessment Unit), and Albert Dupigny (MEST consultant).

ground and/or from the needs of MEST and DFID, policies are updated and added to as required. For example, guidance on administration of payments for MEST related activities was issued by DFID as part of its “Follow-the-Money” policy with the objective of ensuring that funds for programme delivery achieve the intended impact. **All DFID programmes are required to establish fiduciary controls as part of their programme management.** The policy has been discussed with MEST and the Leh Wi Learn team will continue to work closely with MEST staff to explore the most efficient arrangements for supporting field activities.

The programme issued a procurement notice during the quarter for the purchase of motorbikes for the 125 recruited SSOs. Due process is being followed to achieve compliance with DFID and GoSL procurement rules. An important gap occurred in not sharing the notice with MEST in advance of publication and this will be urgently ameliorated. A senior MEST official will be part of the bid opening and selection process going forward. Future procurement notices will be reviewed with MEST prior to publication.

3 Plans for next quarter, July – Sept 2017

The following highlighted activities for next quarter build on current progress and are in line with the implementation workplan approved in the programme Inception Report.

Output 2: Improving learning conditions in secondary schools

Q02 Activities	July	Aug	Sept
Contract all 115 SSOs pending positive reference checks as well as re-contract 10 Port Loko SSOs to allow all SSOs to be on the same contractual terms	x		
Finalise logistical plan and content material development in advance of national rollout of SSO programme	x		
Support Port Loko DDE to complete testing of teacher remediation approach in advance of induction programme and training lessons for all SSOs (including selected supervisors as Master Trainers)	x		
Run SSO induction programme and training lessons in all regions and districts, ensuring that existing supervisors benefit		x	x
Finalise and agree plans for development of SSS Resource Packs for teachers and students with MEST, IRC and DFID	x		
Work with MEST to identify and recommend competent writers and WASSCE examiners to participate in IRC-led writing workshop	x		
Provide support as required to development of SSS Resource Packs by writing team coordinated by IRC, and TA to MEST to support technical review of drafts			x

Output 3: Strengthening MEST's capacity to plan, monitor and manage service delivery

Q02 Activities	July	Aug	Sept
Provide TA to support finalisation of updated ESP and Implementation Plan for GPE independent evaluation	x		
Support MEST with tools for identifying and monitoring ESP derived targets for sector performance monitoring through the post-PDT IMT structure		x	x
Ongoing support to Coordinator's Office, including next quarterly social mobilisation exercise in September	x	x	x
Review options for building on PRP Capacity Building Plan for MEST, subject to available resources			x

Output 4: Strengthening district capacity to hold schools and teachers to account

Q02 Activities	July	Aug	Sept
Run comprehensive 3-week induction programme for DSOs	x		
Hold consultation meeting with all DDEs to clarify DSO roles and responsibilities; also clarify issues related to operational arrangements for supporting field activities		x	
Manage DSOs against weekly deliverables and troubleshoot challenges		x	x
Collaborate with DDEs to run the first continuous professional development session for DSOs focused on teaching how to formally evaluate SSOs		x	x
Ongoing support to the Situation Room	x	x	x
Support the EU on ToRs for comprehensive assessment of EMIS capacity within MEST		x	x
Test school data triangulation/validation through piloting use of SSOs and supervisors to collect school information			x
Generate simple dashboards from Situation Room data and (subsequently) information collected through SSOs to support Inspectorate Directorate and DDEs	x	x	x
Carry out detailed analysis of examinations performance results following publication of public exams results		x	x

Output 5: Improving capacity for monitoring, research and learning

Q02 Activities	July	Aug	Sept
Complete data cleaning and analysis of learning assessment survey data	x	x	
Produce and circulate final assessment survey report			x
Conduct dissemination workshop(s) for relevant stakeholders (this might slip into October)			x
Conduct benchmarking workshop for MEST stakeholders to evaluate test items used for assessment survey and review performance benchmarks and learning standards	x		
Carry out consultations with MEST and other stakeholders on how results of the assessment survey can best be used (to ensure the right evidence products reaching the right people at the right time)	x		
Develop appropriate evidence products and communication plans for a variety of stakeholders (based on outcome of consultations)		x	x

Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing
CEO	Chief Education Officer
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development)
DDE	Deputy Director of Education
DEO	District Education Office
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DSO	District Support Officer
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESP	Education Sector Plan
EU	European Union
GATE	Girls Access to Education
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
GPE	Global Partnership on Education
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IT	Information Technology
JAM	Joint Aid Management
JSR	Joint Sector Review
JSS	Junior Secondary School
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
Leh Wi Learn	Krio for “Let’s Learn” – traditionally “Le Wi Lan”
LPMs	Lesson Plan Manuals
MEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MM	Mott MacDonald
MTR	Mid Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PDT	Presidential Delivery Team
PRP	President’s Recovery Priorities
SSEIP	Sierra Leone Secondary Education Improvement Programme
SSO	School Support Officer
SSS	Senior Secondary School
TA	Technical Assistance
UK	United Kingdom
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VFM	Value for Money
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination