



## SIERRA LEONE TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION



# Sierra Leone Teacher Deployment Protocol (2024)

This document provides an overview of the Sierra Leone Teaching Service Commission (TSC) teacher deployment protocol finalised in August 2024, containing details on the development of the protocol and the deployment process for the academic year 2024/25. It builds on the existing TSC protocol documents *An Overview To The Teacher Recruitment Protocol (2020)* and *User Manual - Protocol for Recruitment of Teachers into Approved and Newly Approved schools (2020)*.

In Section 1, a background to the teacher deployment protocol is provided ahead of rationale for and details on the revised protocol, including the variables used. Section 2 details the teacher allocation for the academic year 2024/25 at district-level, both for Government of Sierra Leone recruitment and foundational learning programme external support. Section 3 provides details on the targeted districts and Section 4 concludes with next steps and future direction.

## Section 1. Sierra Leone Teacher Deployment Protocol Development

### Background

The Sierra Leone TSC was established in 2017 as a semi-autonomous body separate from the then Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), which was later split into the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE). Following two teacher recruitment processes for 2018/19 and 2019/20 that were not guided by evidence use, in 2020 TSC partnered with the World Bank to develop the *Teaching Service Teacher Recruitment Protocol* to allocate teachers more to *far to reach* areas for application in 2021/22 and 2022/23 recruitment processes. This protocol included variables such as pupil teacher ratio, teacher status (e.g., qualifications, gender, disability), and location. There was no recruitment in 2023/24 and in 2024 the TSC started work with partner Fab Inc to create an open-source, flexible preference-matching algorithm for the teacher deployment exercise to make the process more effective, targeted, and easier for the 2024/25 recruitment process onwards. The current protocol builds on the previous model and takes into

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consideration school and teacher needs as well as student learning outcomes. It is important to note that in addition to placing newly qualified teachers into the system, the national teacher allocation also consists of recruitment and replacement processes. *Recruitment* involves moving qualified teachers already in schools<sup>1</sup> onto the government payroll through additional financial resources provided by the Ministry of Finance (MoF). TSC works on an annual projection for the recruitment of teachers depending on the demand for teachers, however, MoF gives an annual quota depending on what the government has budgeted for the recruitment of teachers.

*Replacement* involves allocating new teachers to existing payroll positions due to death, voluntary retirement, etc. and does not involve any additional financial resources from MoF.

## Revised Protocol (2024)

The objectives of the revised protocol are to (Teaching Service Commission, 2021):

- Deploy staff to underserved areas by starting with schools that have the lowest pupil to payroll teacher ratio and move closer to the target of 40:1.
- Deploy staff to disadvantaged districts with below-average learning outcomes or those that serve relatively higher numbers of children in [Radical Inclusion policy](#) groups.
- Prioritise schools which have been approved by the MBSSE for more than three years, and have no government-approved teachers.
- Prioritise full-time qualified teachers that have volunteered in approved schools.
- Increase the number of female teachers.
- Increase the number of specialised teachers including Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) and foreign language (Arabic and French) teachers.

The protocol applies an algorithm consisting of a number of variables (detailed below) to identify the most disadvantaged districts to determine equitable distribution. Among the variables, learning outcomes are incorporated based on available and reliable assessment data, as per the [Foundational Learning Partnership Compact](#) trigger on *Equity of Domestic Financing*. Seven data sources for learning assessments have been used in order to ensure that results are representative, reliable, and coherent. A composite measure, combining both national examinations and large-scale external assessments covering literacy and numeracy, has been used to increase the representativeness, reliability, and coherence of the data used. Data from further large scale national assessments on literacy and numeracy planned through the

Partnership Compact agenda (for P0, P2, and P4 class levels) will be added to the protocol upon completion. For the [Radical Inclusion](#)-targeted learner groups, a number of metrics on school and teacher data serve as proxies, for example *Distance to population centre* and *Qualified Teacher*

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<sup>1</sup> Of the 41,378 public primary-school level teachers, 41% are on government payroll (with 39% on payroll across all education levels) (MBSSE Annual School Census (ASC) 2023/24, 2024).

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*to Pupil Ratios* are correlated with data on *Children from rural and underserved areas* and *Children from low-income families*. Aside from the learning assessments, data is sourced from the Annual School Census (ASC) and the Teacher Management Information System (TMIS).

## **Variables included in the Revised Protocol (2024)**

### School data

- Student enrolment
- Number of (payroll) teachers
- School type
- District
- Geo-location
- Approval status
- Financial support status
- School ownership
- School religion
- Distance to nearest population centre

### Teacher data

- Gender
- Qualification
- Geo-location
- Payroll source
- School type
- Distance to nearest population centre
- Geo-location of the teacher's preferred school
- Religion of the teacher's preferred school
- Teachers' subjects teach

### Learning assessment data

- National examinations under the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), including the National Primary School Examination (NPSE), Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE).
- Large-scale, external assessments, including the Baseline for the Sierra Leone Innovation Challenge (SLEIC) 2022, Sierra Leone Secondary Grade Learning Assessment (SGLA) 2018.

## **Further Teacher Allocation Requirements**

In addition to the protocol variables above, other factors are stipulated for the allocation process:

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1. Teachers must be fully qualified and also have passed the TSC licensing examination that is conducted at select times each year.
2. Where possible, teachers are not allocated more than 3 km from their current school to the school in need of deployment.
3. Only government-approved and financially supported schools are available for selection.
4. School deployment is capped at 3 payroll teachers.
5. Movement of teachers between schools of different religions is restricted.
6. For the early childhood development (ECD) deployment under Global Partnership for Education (GPE) funding (referred to below as *GPE ECD allocation 2024/25*), the number of ECD centres in a district is also factored into the algorithm due to the limited number of centres.

### Section 2. Teacher Deployment for the 2024/25 Academic Year

For the 2024/25 academic year, the MoF has allocated additional resources to permanently finance 2,000 positions across all education levels henceforth. This is split between newly qualified teachers entering the system and existing qualified teachers in schools and not already on government payroll.

Additionally, through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) financial support to the Compact, funding is allocated for 1,000 pre-primary teacher positions for the length of the programme (three academic cycles).

This document keeps these two allocations separate and refers to them as follows:

- **GoSL allocation** - 2,000 positions financed across all four levels (district breakdown in Table 1)
- **GPE ECD allocation** - 1,000 positions financed only for pre-primary level (district breakdown in Table 2)

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*Table 1: GoSL allocation*

District	School Level				Total
	Pre-Primary	Primary	Junior Secondary	Senior Secondary	
Bo	0	42	33	14	<b>89</b>
Bombali	9	73	70	39	<b>191</b>
Bonthe	2	40	19	6	<b>67</b>
Falaba	0	34	12	2	<b>48</b>
Kailahun	3	102	40	16	<b>161</b>
Kambia	3	79	78	9	<b>169</b>
Karene	0	92	36	8	<b>136</b>
Kenema	4	107	65	43	<b>219</b>
Koinadugu	2	11	36	10	<b>59</b>
Kono	2	71	67	29	<b>169</b>
Moyamba	0	40	18	2	<b>60</b>
Port Loko	4	58	55	11	<b>128</b>
Pujehun	1	30	5	2	<b>38</b>
Tonkolili	3	74	58	18	<b>153</b>
West Rural	6	88	92	34	<b>220</b>
West Urban	2	25	41	25	<b>93</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>2000</b>

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Table 2: GPE ECD allocation

District	ECD Total
Bo	69
Bombali	67
Bonthe	59
Falaba	44
Kailahun	45
Kambia	73
Karene	44
Kenema	60
Koinadugu	23
Kono	98
Moyamba	22
Port Loko	63
Pujehun	45
Tonkolili	75
West Rural	91
West Urban	122
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>

## Section 3. Calculating Targeted Districts

The method of determining the targeted disadvantaged districts to receive a measurably greater share of the allocation is provided below, focusing on the *GoSL allocation*:

- To determine disadvantaged districts, the average of the composite scores of learning assessments across all districts was calculated (0.433).

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- Districts with a score below the national average (0.433) were identified as disadvantaged.
- This results in 10 out of 16 districts as disadvantaged (highlighted in green below), representing 56.05% of the total deployment. Resultantly, 56% of teachers have been allocated to their preferred school, with 42% within 5km and 2% within 5-10km of their preferred school.
- For the GPE ECD teachers, the allocation to disadvantaged districts represents 53.20% of the total deployment.

*Table 3. District learning outcome scores compared to mean*

District	Score after Weighting Learning Outcome Data	Below the national average? (1 = yes)	Final output of teachers to deploy for “GoSL allocation”	Final output of teachers to deploy for “GPE ECD allocation”
Bo	0.44	0	89	69
Bombali	0.46	0	191	67
Bonthe	0.47	0	67	59
Falaba	0.38	1	48	44
Kailahun	0.41	1	161	45
Kambia	0.42	1	169	73
Karene	0.32	1	136	44
Kenema	0.46	0	219	60
Koinadugu	0.4	1	59	23
Kono	0.31	1	169	98
Moyamba	0.41	1	60	22
Port Loko	0.38	1	128	63
Pujehun	0.25	1	38	45
Tonkolili	0.39	1	153	75

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West Rural	0.68	0	220	91
West Urban	0.75	0	93	122
<b>Total</b>			<b>2000</b>	<b>1000</b>

### Section 4. Future Steps

**Tracking and review.** To understand the impact the teacher allocation has on Sierra Leonean educational outcomes and Radical Inclusion groups, it is essential that progress is accurately tracked. Metrics are planned to be measured and reviewed at regular intervals, at as granular as possible levels, to inform decision-making for the next teacher allocation process.

**Learning assessment data.** More representative assessment data is required to support analysis and better evidence-informed decision making. For instance the large-scale P4 assessment administered by Oxford Policy Management in June 2024 will provide district-level representative data, and the planned upcoming P0 and P2 assessments should also. MBSSE needs to explore how more granular data (e.g., at chiefdom-, community- and school-levels) is possible to be captured in a reliable and representative manner for use in future protocols.

**Radical Inclusion groups data.** More granular collection data on the different groups (pregnant girls and parent learners, children with disabilities, children from rural and underserved areas, children from low-income families) is needed in addition to comprehensive analyses on correlation with existing disadvantaged data. Sources to refine and collect such data include the yearly ASC and the upcoming Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 7.

**Data-focused initiatives and tools.** More accurate and reliable data collected at school-, teacher-, and learner-levels can better inform decision making across the education system and is particularly relevant to enhance teacher allocation equity. The MBSSE should prioritise national scale up of initiatives that focus on these areas, especially those that are demonstrated to function at pilot-level. For example the *One Tablet Per School* programme (also known as *Wi De Ya*) collects attendance data and the pilot proved “instrumental in collecting data and identifying teachers” as stated by a senior government decision-maker.

**Future (equity-focused) teacher allocation policy decisions.** Adopting more timely and proactive measures is suggested to ensure that the teaching workforce is prepared to meet target allocations, especially those focused on driving equity reforms. For instance, stipulations for the licensing exam rule and location of preferred school can generate restrictive results. More proactive measures can involve running protocol simulations several months in advance of



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deadlines, working through different scenarios based on potential MoF financial allocation decisions, and ensuring that there is a surplus of teachers in each district completely ready to meet allocation needs come the beginning of the new academic year (e.g., qualified, licensed, police checks and all other certification and documentation are approved). Moreover, it is recommended that any critical terminology used is consistent with national legislature and other documentation, and/or is discussed and finalised with all relevant stakeholders and published. Finally, it is recommended that the current process of enhancing the equity of domestic finance through teacher deployment be reviewed periodically with critical stakeholders (and with enough supporting evidence on impact) to inform future decision-making and policy choices.