**Job Description**

**Job title:** MERL Officer

**Group:** Education Services Group

**Dept/Project/Service: Roger Federer Foundation (**RFF)

**Reports to:** MERL LEAD

**Responsible for: N/A**

**Usual office base:** Harare

**Grade:** 7

**Project Overview:**

Education Development Trust (EDT) will join the School Readiness Initiative (SRI) as a strategic partner. As the SRI Strategy 2019–2025 ends, the initiative is transitioning into a consolidationand sustainability planning phase (2025–2028). This final phase will focus on ensuring that the gains made under the SRI are institutionally and financially sustainable through the handover of responsibilities, tools, and resources from implementing partners and the Roger Federer Foundation to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE). The consolidation phase of the SRI will focus on finalizing and integrating outstanding interventions and tools developed throughout the initiative, alongside the national scale-up of the Smart Tablet Early Learning Assessment (STELA) tool—adopted by MoPSE in April 2025—to all 8,014 primary schools and ECE A learners (ages 3–4). A key component of this effort will be the development and rollout of a cost-effective national capacity-building package delivered through MoPSE’s Continuous Professional Development (CPD) structure. Additionally, the initiative will support the integration of SRI practices into the teacher training curricula of 14 colleges, whose first cohort of SRI-aligned graduates will begin deployment in 2026. To ensure inclusivity, the SRI will also assist in strengthening the quality of education in Community ECE Centres, which serve a large population of early learners in underserved areas.

**Job purpose and scope:**

The Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning (MERL) Officer will play a crucial role in overseeing the monitoring and evaluation framework for the project, ensuring that data collection and analysis align with the goals of the SRI. This role is essential for assessing the impact of interventions, providing evidence for decision-making and policy implementation updates and reviews, and facilitating continuous improvement in educational practices.

**Job Objectives:**

1. To develop and implement monitoring and evaluation plans in alignment with project objectives and donor requirements.
2. To oversee data collection processes, ensuring accuracy, reliability, and ethical considerations are upheld.
3. To analyse monitoring and evaluation data to provide actionable insights and recommendations for programme enhancement.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

1. Implement and maintain the M&E framework in line with SRI objectives and donor requirements.
2. Develop tools, indicators, and methodologies for effective data collection and analysis.
3. Ensure availabilty of baseline programme data, to track progress against progress towards impact at midline and endline.
4. Ensure routine monitoring of project activities, outputs, and outcomes.
5. Collaborate with field teams to gather timely and accurate data.
6. Maintain databases and dashboards for tracking project progress and outcomes.
7. Conduct quantitative and qualitative data analysis to assess project performance.
8. Ensure data quality assurance mechanisms are in place and consistently applied.
9. Prepare regular M&E reports, including progress updates, impact assessments, and lessons learned.
10. Contribute to biannual donor reports, internal performance reviews, and stakeholder presentations.
11. Document best practices, innovations, and success stories emerging from project implementation.
12. Support the design and implementation of operational research, case studies, and evaluations.
13. Facilitate learning workshops and reflection sessions to assess project progress and extract lessons learned.
14. Ensure that data insights and research findings inform ongoing program design and policy recommendations.
15. Provide training and ongoing technical support to program staff and partners on M&E tools and practices.
16. Promote a culture of data-driven decision-making across the team and with implementing partners.

**Person specification:**

#### **Knowledge**

**Essential**

* Bachelor's or master's degree in a relevant field such as Monitoring and Evaluation, Research Methods, Social Sciences, or related disciplines.
* Proven experience (2-3 Years) in designing and implementing monitoring and evaluation frameworks for development projects.
* Strong analytical and data management skills, with proficiency in quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.
* Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to effectively engage with diverse stakeholders.
* Experience working with digital data collection tools and visualisation platforms (Data Collection, KoBoToolbox) and Data Visualisation : PowerBI is preferred.
* Knowledge of ethical considerations in research and data collection, particularly when working with children and vulnerable populations.

#### **Experience**

**Essential**

* Demonstrated experience in designing, implementing, and managing monitoring and evaluation frameworks for development projects
* Proficiency in developing M&E plans, data collection tools, and indicators to track project outcomes and impact.
* Experience conducting research studies, including data collection, analysis, and reporting preferably with Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.
* Experience in engaging with diverse stakeholders, including project partners, donors, government officials, and community members.
* Familiarity with the education sector, particularly early childhood development, and the unique challenges and opportunities it presents for monitoring and evaluation efforts.
* Proven track record of collaborating with diverse stakeholders, including NGOs, government entities, educational institutions, and community organizations to drive project success.

**Desirable:**

* Experience of living and working in Zimbabwe and an understanding of the issues facing the education sector in Zimbabwe

#### **Skills**

**Essential**

* Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including strong donor report writing and in presenting technical content for a non-technical audience using dashboards.
* Stakeholder Engagement: Strong organisational and coordination skills
* Demonstrable ability to manage competing demands and set priorities
* Fluency in English

**Desirable**

* Fluency in least one Zimbabwean local language

**Competency Band:** 3]

**Key Competencies for the role:**

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| **Our Values** | **Key Competency 1** | **Key Competency 2** |
| **Excellence - Creating and Leading Success** | Delivering the vision | Motivating Others |
| **Integrity - Supporting and Building Trust** | Upholding principles and values | Communicating with impact and empathy |
| **Accountability - Delivering and Improving** | Driving performance | Delivering commercial outcomes |
| **Collaboration - Engaging and Partnering** | Engaging others to achieve goals | Influencing and negotiating |

*Education Development Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of everyone who comes into contact with us. We operate a zero-tolerance policy to sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH). Applicants must be willing to undergo safeguarding screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and police checks. Successful candidates will be required to sign a safeguarding declaration to confirm that they will abide by the Trust’s safeguarding policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, Protection from SEAH, and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct*