FORM AM 10-8:
Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)
Limited International Competition (LIC)

Country of Destination: Nigeria

Reference Number:
GPE PROJECT ON COORDINATION OF DISTANCE EDUCATIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING RESPONSE FOR FIVE SELECTED ANGLOPHONE COUNTRIES IN WEST AFRICA AND SAHEL – 727GLO1005.1.2

Description:
Creation of a sub-regional learning platform for teachers and students. The platform will support strengthening capacities of teaching and management staff on development and implementation of open-source distance learning, as well as the creation of and access to distance learning materials/classes. Emphasis will be given to alternatives for low-no-connectivity scenarios.


Posting Date: 20th October 2020.

United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) hereby invite qualified entities to submit their expression of interest for a planned solicitation process as follows:

Objectives and Scope
A Consortium of grant agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank) are joining forces to help eligible countries adopt evidence-based strategies and measures to respond to the pandemic. The Consortium is supporting targeted countries through three related interventions, focusing on the adaptation, scaling and rapidly deploying a regional platform for distance and blended learning, including strengthening regional cooperation and pooling resources for the development and diversification of educational resources, as well as training teachers and relevant educational personnel. In this vein, five (5) Anglophone West African countries are expected to work together and select project activities, especially those related to training workshops, the sharing of experiences, tools, resources and guidelines developed in the course of the Consortium’s support.

Five Anglophone West African countries, namely Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, have been identified to replicate the model described above, contextualized to local needs. These countries represent 22% of the primary and secondary learners in Sub-Saharan Africa.

As part of the Consortium’s support to Western African Countries, the UNESCO Abuja Regional Office is implementing a sub-component named “Sub-regional capacities strengthened through Global Coalition partners to support distance and blended learning
across selected English-speaking African countries with the aim of leaving no learners behind*, under which this request for expression of interest is published. Below are some scoping elements for the platform:

**Users**
Main users: Teachers and learners (from 5 y/o to 18 y/o).
Secondary users: tutors and family members

**Number of Users:** Estimated 500,000 users across the sub-region

**Countries:** Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, The Gambia

**Level of education:** primary and secondary

**Main disciplines/skills:** Anglophone West African Curriculum

**Expected Procurement Components**

Concerning the technical aspects of the Project, the main deliverable expected is the development of a sub-regional online platform, preferably using Open Source Software.

The contractor will be assisted by findings of a systematic mapping of existing national platforms currently being carried out by UNESCO. This study will help identifying strengths and weaknesses of existing national platforms and can inform functional and non-functional requirements for the appropriate development of the sub-regional platform, reflecting local realities of the five selected countries. In addition, an outcome document on the digitalization of curriculum and other learning content in ECOWAS shall be developed by UNESCO, together with guidance tools for teachers, on how to plan and conduct home-based teaching for distance learning solutions with special focus on mitigating against prevailing infrastructural challenges such as low-no connectivity and hybrid learning. This document can also be used by the selected contractor for guidance on best approaches to distance learning in the region.

Further details about the scope of work and procurement components are available in the Terms of Reference under Annex A.

**Special Procurement Conditions and Additional Information:**

In order to be considered, interested entities should submit their Expression of Interest including a comprehensive Technical and Financial Proposals as defined in the Terms of Reference Attached

The Expression of Interest and accompanying documents must be received by UNESCO no later than 30th October 2020 preferably at the email indicated below.

This request for Expression of Interest does not constitute a solicitation. No further details of the planned solicitation can be made available prior to issuance of the solicitation documents.
UNESCO reserves the right to change or cancel the requirement at any time during the EOI and/or solicitation process. UNESCO also reserves the right to require compliance with additional conditions as and when issuing the final solicitation documents.

Submitting a reply to a call for EOI does not automatically guarantee receipt of the solicitation documents when issued. Invitations to Bid or Requests for Proposals and any subsequent purchase order or contract will be issued in accordance with the rules and procedures of UNESCO.

**UNESCO Contact Information**

UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Abuja for Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Togo and Nigeria.
Plot 617/618 Diplomatic Driver / Central Business District - Abuja
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Attn: Mr. Lamine Sow, Officer in Charge
E-mail: ml.sow@unesco.org
cc: do.oyerinde@unesco.org
1. Background and objectives

The COVID-19 pandemic is deeply disturbing education systems throughout the world and exacerbating learning inequalities and disproportionately affecting the most marginalized population groups in every country. The financial support provided by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), aims to support “Continued learning for children, particularly those most marginalized (rural children, girls, children living with disabilities and those who are displaced amongst others...), ensured through the development, dissemination and delivery, at scale, of new and existing global and regional learning continuity approaches in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

In line with this, UNESCO Regional Office, Abuja, under this project, is responsible for, amongst others, ensuring “Sub-regional capacities are strengthened through Global Coalition partners to support distance and blended learning across selected English-speaking countries, within the sub-region, with the aim of leaving no learners behind”. Consequently, UNESCO Regional Office, Abuja is seeking contractors to create a sub-regional learning platform for teachers and students. The platform would support strengthening capacities of teaching and management staff on development and implementation of open-source distance learning, as well as the creation of and access to distance learning materials/classes. Emphasis will be given to alternatives for low-no-connectivity scenarios.

2. Scope of Work

The contractor shall, under the direct supervision of the project Senior ICT and Education platforms consultant, deliver a sub-regional teaching and learning digital platform according to the requirements listed in this TOR.

Please note: we welcome new ideas and innovation in your proposals, which may complement features detailed in this document. If you do propose something different or innovative, please provide justifications for them and indicate explicitly how they will help achieve the project’s objectives.

Information on platform needs and assumptions

Basic functional needs / Main activities to perform via the platform
- Ability to consume content/attend classes and evaluation primarily via mobile phones (learner)
- Create virtual classes, tests and evaluation, structure curricula, etc. (usual activities from learning management systems) (teacher)
• Interaction between teachers/tutors and learners via the platform or by integrations with SMS/WhatsApp/Messenger
• Import/upload existing content from other platforms/sources (e.g. national and regional repositories, Open Education Resources, etc.)
• Ready to deploy content library of already existing educational content
• Export/download content to use in other platforms
• Access multimedia content (videos, audios, printouts, interactive classes)
• Easily create users, roles, assign courses and review performance
• Access analytics dashboards on learners' attendance and performance, in particular identifying learners excluded from the learning process. Enable different levels of analysis (class, school, region, country)
• Export analytics in (.xls, .csv) for reporting and integration with other systems

Desirable advanced functions (not mandatory)
• Ability to create content and classes using mobile phones
• Personalized learning function (also for low tech dispositive) - Learners build their own learning pathway
• Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning features (for system administrators)
• AI powered learning analytics (for system administrators)

Basic technical needs
• Mobile-first (including low cost mobile phones compatible), providing also access via desktops
• Consumption of content offline/low bandwidth
• SCORM format compatible
• User and role management
• Analytics dashboard for class/school/district/country insights
• Mass-mailing/notification feature enabled for teachers
• Automated notifications, including possibility to integrate SMS and/or WhatsApp text messaging (desirable)
• Documentation on the use of the platform, troubleshooting and users' community support

Assumptions
• Use of Open Source Technologies
• Facilitation of use and sharing openly licensed content (OER)
• Platform will be maintained and for a specific duration, minimum of 24 months (i.e. security updates, server management)

3. Duration
The expected duration for this project activity is within 8 months, from November 2020 to July 2021.

4. Working Location
Most of the work required for this project will be done virtually, from a distance, however when required travel will be expected for meetings and discussions where physical presence may be better-suited (in-line with observance of strict Covid-19 protocols). There will be frequent communication between the contractor and the
GPE Technical Manager and other members of the UNESCO GPE team working out of the UNESCO Regional Office in Abuja.

5. Deliverables

A timeline for the deliverables and expected outcomes outlined in the Objectives and Scope of Work will be agreed upon with the contractor within the stipulated project activity duration. Milestones will be set with timelines, and a mutually accepted project charter will be adopted.

6. Proposed Payment Schedule

The payments will be made based on milestone attainments and achievements of specified outcomes. An initial mobilization of 40% of the total contract value will be made upon signing of contract. Subsequent payments of 15%, 35% and 10% will be made upon appropriate milestone achievements and project completion respectively.

7. Contract Supervision

The assignment will be carried out under the supervision of the GPE Technical Manager (project Senior ICT and Education platforms consultant) under the overall guidance of the Head of the Education Sector.

8. Evaluation Process

Each submission will be assessed first on its technical merits and subsequently on its cost. In making the final decision, UNESCO considers both technical and financial aspects. The Evaluation Team first reviews the technical proposal, followed by a review of the financial proposal. The submission obtaining the highest overall score (after aggregating scores from both the technical and financial proposals) that offers UNESCO the best value for money will be recommended for the award of the contract.

9. Format of proposal

Technical Proposal

Format and instructions of technical proposal is provided as Annex 1

Financial Proposal

The Financial Proposal should include but not be limited to the following:

Submission is expected to consist of a lump sum financial proposal to complete the entire assignment based on the terms of reference. The lump sum should be broken down to show details for the following:

- Daily rate in terms of Human Capacity and Infrastructure dedicated to the different project activities.
- Infrastructure procurement and equipment costs (if any)
- Hosting and other hosting-related costs such as server maintenance in annual basis
- Other financial implications (e.g. communication plan, evaluation)

10. Evaluation Weighting Criteria

Cumulative Analysis will be used to evaluate and award submissions. The evaluation criteria associated with the TOR is split between the technical and financial proposals as follows:

70% Technical
30% Financial
100% Total
Annex 1: Technical Proposal

1. About your company and your people
1.1. Provide a 1-2 pages description of your company, including date of foundation, number of employees, last 3 years revenue and examples of projects with regional/global scale. Highlight any work done for large intergovernmental organisations and/or for the development sector. Specify experience in working in partnership with ECOWAS and/or other regional organizations. Demonstrate ability to rapidly produce and deliver the expected results and under tight deadlines. Demonstrate prior experience in working with Sub Saharan Africa education systems and priorities (priority needs from teacher training institutions and curriculum development units), as well as proven ability to rapidly liaise with both institutional and non-institutional partners in the five selected countries and within the sub-region in order to establish strategic linkages and leverage on existing strengths and resources related to curriculum and pedagogical contents.

1.2. Provide your company’s organization chart.

1.3. Inform below the 5 most recent clients your company has been working with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client name</th>
<th>Period of last project</th>
<th>Number of hours</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>URL of product(s) developed</th>
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1.4. Inform below the 5 clients who had ever contracted the largest number of hours (possible to repeat from the list above).

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<th>Client name</th>
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1.5. Is your company using open source technologies in its projects? Which ones?

1.6. Available profiles: Indicate below the number of different profiles your company counts with (including project managers, front end developers, back end developers, mobile developers, technical architects, web designers, UX designer, testers, etc.)

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<th>Profiles</th>
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<td>Front end developer</td>
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1.7. In-house available technical expertise: Indicate below the number of professionals with corresponding level of knowledge in different technologies, software, tools, frameworks and programming languages. Include additional items you deem relevant to provide a high-quality service in addition to the ones below.

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Total

2. About the work your company has been doing
2.1. List below, in order of success, 10 (ten) projects finalised up to 5-years ago, in particular for the education sector.

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2.2. Provide the documentation of the most successful project carried out by the company in the last 3 years

3. Working with UNESCO
3.1. Why is your company the best partner to develop and maintain digital projects of UNESCO? (maximum 1 page)

3.2. Describe the organizational structure to be set up to manage the different tasks required to perform the services covered by this RFP. Describe of how the daily work will be organized and how close collaboration with UNESCO will be facilitated.

3.3. Provide one-page CVs of key personnel that will be dedicated to UNESCO collaboration with full contact details. The CV must indicate full professional English
competency (minimum C1 level). UNESCO reserves the right to request copies of diplomas (Bachelor degree minimum), technical certificates, and language certificates.

4. Methodology
4.1 List of proposed personnel to carry out this assignment along with roles, relevant experience and justification.
In addition to the development phase, please include suggested HR roles for successful maintenance, after launch, for example: IT expert for troubleshooting and small developments/fixes/updates (roles: web developer and systems architect) and digital education expert (pedagogical aspect) for assisting teachers with use and contextualization of content.

4.2 Detailed methodological approach and line of action explicitly stating how to meet requirements and scope of work for this project.

4.3 Workplan/ Gantt Chart with sequential and parallel activities (weekly periodicity)

Suggested minimum milestones (edit and complement as appropriate):
MM/YY - Definition and agreement of functional and technical specs
MM/YY - Start of (iterative) development
MM/YY - First pilot delivered for test
MM/YY - Validation and delivery of first version (V1)
MM/YY - Addition of content to the V1
MM/YY – Controlled roll out in priority communities, assessing use and feedback
MM/YY - Start of second stage of (iterative) development
MM/YY - Pilot of V2 delivered for test
MM/YY - Validation and delivery of second version (V2)
MM/YY – Roll out of the V2 publicly and general use
MM/YY – Preparation of exit strategy

4.4 Hosting and maintenance
• Define the hosting requirements for the proposed platform
• Define the maintenance requirements and recommendations for the platform

4.5 Measures to identify and mitigate against any risks/challenges that may be a hindrance to the overall success of the project. Also, indicate plans for sustainability, maintenance and exit strategy. Include estimates of yearly running costs of the platform and costing schemes (per user, SaaS, etc.) after the platform is finalized.

5. Proposal
Present your proposal for this assignment. Feel free to include wireframes, mockups, and any other supports to fully comprehend what your company is proposing for this particular assignment.
Attachment B

Attachment B -
Contract for services