**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Midline Study for “Community Based Accelerated Learning Spaces (CBALS)” Project by READ Foundation**

* **Background**

The READ Foundation is a non-profit educational network in Pakistan. It runs a network of 400 schools across Pakistan, providing quality education to children to provide them with a better future.

READ Foundation, referred to as the ‘Organization’ is implementing a 36-month FCDO-funded project in Gilgit-Baltistan and Sindh. Under the project 120 Community-Based Accelerated Learning Spaces (CBALS) have been established in the districts of Diamer and Tharparkar to provide safe, free, and accessible primary education to 3600 out-of-school girls with the potential to re-integrate into mainstream education. Under the project, fourteen formal schools will be established in the project areas in 2025 to ensure access to education for the CBALS learners. The project objectives are threefold: focusing on improved learning outcomes, improved access to education, and a positive change in community attitudes toward the importance of educating girls.

* **Project Introduction**

In April 2023, READ Foundation started the implementation of a three-year project in 2 districts in Pakistan, Tharparkar, and Diamer, with the aim to The project outcomes and outputs are stated below:

**Outcome:**    Marginalised/out-of-school girls (aged 6-16 years) have improved literacy and numeracy skills in the Diamer District of GB, and Tharparkar District of Sindh, Pakistan.

**Output 1:** Improved access to education for marginalized girls (6-16 yrs)

**Output 2:** Improved quality of education delivered at 120 CBALS

**Output 3:** Positive change in target communities attitudes towards girls’ education

* **Purpose of the Midline Study**

The Organization is seeking to hire a consultant (individual/firm), referred to as the ‘Consultant’ to design and conduct a midline assessment for the CBALS project. In the first quarter of the project, a Baseline Study was conducted. This Midline Study will assess the project’s progress during the last 20 months against the Baseline Study and also assess additional information for READ Foundation. The consultant will collate and analyze outputs, intermediate results, outcomes, lessons learned, challenges faced, and best practices obtained during the implementation period. The Midline Study will assess the performance of the project against its Logical Framework as well. The consultant will also assess the preliminary indications of the potential impact and sustainability of results. The findings and recommendations of the study will inform the key stakeholders including government officials, teachers, learners, village, tehsil, and district education committee members and community members.

The Midline Study will also assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability of the overall project.

Relevance: How relevant is the project to the beneficiary countries?

Effectiveness: How well is the project on track in delivering?

Efficiency: Were KPIs, deliverables, and milestones delivered on time and budget? Why/why not?

The evaluation shall follow a participatory approach and engage a range of project stakeholders in the process. Data collection should be triangulated to the extent possible to ensure the validity and reliability of findings and draw on the following methods: comprehensive desk review, including a stakeholder analysis; surveys; key informant interviews; focus groups; and field visits.

* **Scope:**

1. Review of existing literature (listed in Annex A) related to the project.
2. Conduct household surveys in selected areas of girls' enrollment attendance and dropout rates in the CBALS and the reasons, as well as factors influencing access to education.
3. Focus group discussions with girls, parents/caretakers (gender segregated), and community leaders
4. Key informant interviews with government officials, NGO representatives, and other stakeholders and students in these districts.

* **Geographical Locations:**

Diamer District (75 villages in Tehsil Chilas, Darel, and Tangir) in Gilgit Baltistan, and Tharparkar District (45 villages in Taluka Mithi, Islamkot, and Diplo) in Sindh

* **Methodology:**

The survey will utilize both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect information, ensuring in-depth analysis of the status of outcome and output indicators. The information collection methods will include a review of secondary data, and a review of project documents, including the proposal and work plans, baseline study, log frame, progress reports, focus group discussions; and key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders.  As much as possible, the consultant should ensure the survey is conducted in a participatory manner and ensure that all the relevant stakeholders should be meaningfully and fully involved in the process.

The consultant is expected to coordinate planning, enumerators training for accuracy in information collection, field tool testing, and analytical findings as per the organization’s reporting standards/criteria. The consultant will propose a specific methodology in the inception report to the Organization for approval before proceeding with the fieldwork. The inception report must provide details on the sampling strategy and quality assurance measures along the process. The information collection and analysis must include faith diversity, gender, age, and disability disaggregation.

Midline research methods must provide information that is sufficiently representative, detailed, and accurate. The consultant will abide by the Safeguarding Policy of the project while conducting the survey. The survey will be carried out in the following phases:

1. Desk review: A desk review of project documents
2. Development of the survey tool: A survey tool will be developed based on the literature review and with the help of local experts and stakeholders.
3. Testing of Survey Tool
4. Sampling: A representative sample of CBALS, CBALS learners, parents, teachers, and community members will be selected using a multistage sampling technique.
5. Data collection: Data will be collected through face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and key informant interviews (KIIs).
6. Data analysis: The data collected will be analyzed using statistical software and qualitative analysis techniques.
7. Report writing: A comprehensive report will be written highlighting the findings of the KAP survey, along with recommendations for improving girls' education in these districts.

* **Deliverables:**

Minimum requirements under deliverables are as follows:

1. Inception report including a detailed description of the methodology.
2. Survey tools for data collection.
3. Presentation of draft midline report with a focus on findings and its analysis
4. Final midline report and presentation (on the agreed indicators and analysis based on the information collected, supplemented by a set of visual aids, including maps and charts, to illustrate key findings)
5. A database of household survey responses and other data collected during the survey.

The draft and final midline study reports need, as a minimum, to contain the following components:

1. Table of Contents
2. Acronyms
3. Executive Summary
4. Introduction and Background
5. Purpose and Scope
6. Methodology
   1. Limitations to Methodology
7. Process Evaluation
   1. Effectiveness: How was the project delivered?
   2. Relevance: How relevant is the project to the needs of the area? What do stakeholders and beneficiaries think about how the project is being implemented?
   3. Efficiency: Were KPIs, deliverables, and milestones delivered on time and budget? Why/why not?
   4. Efficiency: Is the project a cost-effective means of achieving the results?
8. Quantitative measurements of each log frame indicator (in a table format)
9. Conclusions
10. Assessment of the likelihood of achieving outcome and impacts
11. Learnings
12. Recommendations
13. Appendices
    1. E.g., Copies of surveys or interview transcripts used, TORs developed, links to raw data, etc.

* **Timeline:**

The Midline study is expected to be completed within four weeks starting from March 2025.

The assignment is expected to be completed within four weeks from the date of signing of the contract. The proposed timeline for the assignment is as below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Major tasks/outputs of the assignment** | **Responsibility** | **Deadlines** |
| Orientation meeting with a selected consultant on the scope of work, tools, methodologies, and sharing relevant project documents | Organization and Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Detailed inception report including detailed methodology and tools, sampling approach, data quality assurance procedures, updated risk assessment, and data management and analysis plan. | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Review inception report and draft tools and feedback to the consultant | Organization | TBD |
| Final inception report and tools finalized and shared; enumerators hired, and contact details shared | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Planning meetings on information collection and pretesting of information collection instruments. | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Share any changes to tools following the pretesting | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Information collection in the target areas | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Collected information cleaning, analysis, and sharing of the first draft report | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Present key findings/information validation in consultation with contracting organization staff | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Feedback from the contracting organization staff | Organization | TBD |
| Submit a second draft report addressing to organization’s comments on the first draft. | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| Review the second draft report and the organization’s feedback to the consultant. | Organization | TBD |
| Address comments and share final baseline reports (i.e., full report, summary report, and PowerPoint presentation of summary report) | Consulting Firm | TBD |
| **Total Level of Effort** | **4 weeks** | |

* **Qualifications and Skills**
* Individuals/Consultants named by the Consulting Firm in the proposal should hold a University degree in any field, preferably Social Sciences. Postgraduate education is an added advantage.
* In-depth knowledge and experience in research methods (household survey, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions).
* Knowledge of and familiarity with local context, and religious and cultural sensitivities.
* Fluent in both oral and written English and the local languages of the project areas.
* Knowledge of the organization’s thematic program areas as mentioned above will be an asset
* Excellent analytical, communication and report writing skills
* **Submission and Evaluation of Proposals**

The proposal should include

1. A brief technical proposal (5-10 pages) on the organization’s letterhead, including an outline of the methodological approach and activities proposed considered to be necessary to achieve the contract objectives and a tentative timeline with key milestones.
2. One recent example of a similar baseline survey report written by the applicant;
3. Financial proposal detailing consultant(s) itemized fees, information collection, and administrative costs (payment will be in installments and the first installment will be issued on approval of the first deliverable).
4. CV (if more than one, please submit CVs for all team members and details of different roles and responsibilities)

The Midline Study and its report preparation process must incorporate the following as cross-cutting:

 Protection/Safeguarding

Inclusion

The evaluation method to finalize the consultant will be based on quality and cost-effectiveness. A two-stage procedure shall be utilized in evaluating the Proposals; a technical evaluation (75% of the score) and a financial evaluation (25% of the score). For the evaluation of the technical proposals, the Organization shall consider the following criteria, with the indicated weights:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Technical evaluation** | | **Maximum Points** |
| 1 | Consultants’ relevant academic qualifications | 10 |
| 2 | Firm’s relevant experience with relevant research methods | 20 |
| 3 | The firm’s knowledge and familiarity with the project areas and local context | 10 |
| 4 | Consultants’ relevant language skills | 2.5 |
| 5 | Candidate’s knowledge of thematic program areas | 2.5 |
| 6 | Candidate’s analytical, communication, and report-writing skills | 5 |
| **Sub-total Organization** | | **50** |
| 1 | To what degree does the proposal show an understanding of the task? | 15 |
| 2 | Have the Terms of Reference been addressed in sufficient detail? | 15 |
| 3 | Is the conceptual framework adopted appropriate for the task? | 10 |
| 4 | Is the sequence of activities and the planning logical, realistic, and promising efficient implementation of the Contract? | 10 |
| **Sub-total Methodology** | | **50** |
| **Total Technical Score** | | **100** |

* **Responsibilities of READ Foundation and the Consultant**

**READ Foundation**

* Initial Meeting and Orientation with the TORs
* Review and provide inputs to final survey tools (questionnaires, formats, checklists).
* Facilitate overall data collection process in the field for all activities as needed
* Provide relevant documents (project proposal, Baseline Study, activities reports)
* Review and give feedback on the tools, process, ways, and means and draft the report
* Ensure timely payments based on agreed terms and conditions in the contract

**Consultant (Organization/firm/individual)**

* Visit the project area to understand the context
* Determine the sampling frame after agreement of the CBALS team  Share profiles of key team members selected for the survey and arrange introductory meetings with the team
* Share research tools and forms to be used before using them
* Data entry following all data cleaning steps with analysis and interpretation
* Submit raw data with the first draft presentation to CBALS Project for feedback (Excel sheet, notes, pictures)
* Present table of contents and the first draft of the main findings for initial review and feedback from the CBALS Project
* Incorporate CBALS Project’s feedback in the second draft and the final report
* Submit the final Midline Study report approved by CBALS Project along with supporting documentation attachment.
* **Logistics**

Logistics arrangement will be the responsibility of the consultant. *CBALS field teams will facilitate linkages*

* **Schedule of payments**

**Installments                                         Amount                       Milestone**

First installment                                     20%                             Submission of work plan and travel plan

Second Instalment                                 50%                             Submission of first Draft and revised version

Third Instalment                                   30%                             Submission and approval of final report

* **Progress controls and payment installments’**

1)     The organization/firm/individual will prepare and submit the work plans for approval and report progress weekly to CBALS Project Manager.

2)     The organization/firm/individual will keep the CBALS project team informed and involved regularly

3)     The organization/firm/individual will work to update the CBALS team about progress, challenges, mitigation strategy

4)     Tax will be deducted at source as per the government of Pakistan laws of tax deduction.

**Confidentiality**

Details about the project, bidding process, and final selection decision a confidential process of the organization. Raw materials/data are property of READ Foundation which will be handed over to READ Foundation with the final version of findings of the midline study.

* **Application Submission Deadline:**

Please submit your proposals, no later than Feb 24, 2025 to sajid.bukhari@readfoundation.org