REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

UNESCO is inviting proposals from organizations for the work assignment described in Annex A.

To enable you to prepare a proposal for this assignment, please see Annex A. Your proposal should comprise:

- CVs of staff assigned to the project (see section 4 of Annex A).
- An outline detailing the degree to which in country research capacity and knowledge will be leveraged.
- A description of the way in which relevant stakeholders will be engaged throughout the process such that their policy priority needs are appropriately addressed.
- A timeline estimation aligned with the proposed 10-12 weeks country research process.
- Description of past relevant educational research experience in Africa and Niger, in particular. If the proposal is submitted by more than one organization, provide a brief overview of the track record of each organization in line with its proposed role.
- A financial proposal: the amount to be charged for the assignment.

If any of the above required information is missing, your application will be considered incomplete and disqualified. Your proposal and supporting documents must be in English or French.

UNESCO places great emphasis on ensuring that the objectives of the work assignment, as described in the Terms of Reference, are met. Accordingly, in evaluating the proposals for the assignment, attention will focus first and foremost on the technical elements. From those proposals deemed suitable in relation to the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference, UNESCO shall select the proposal(s) that offer the Organization best value for money.

Your proposal should be submitted by e-mail no later than close of business (18:00 Central European time) on 24 August 2022. E-mail proposals should not exceed 5MB.

The e-mail should be addressed to j.kiyenje@unesco.org. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their proposal is received by the deadline.

Thank you for your interest in this UNESCO assignment; and we look forward to receiving your proposal.

Global Education Monitoring Report

1. Background

The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report is an editorially independent, authoritative, and evidence-based annual report, hosted and published by UNESCO. It has the mandate, established in the Incheon Declaration of the World Education Forum in May 2015, to monitor progress (i) on education in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and (ii) on the implementation of national and international strategies to achieve the fourth goal on education (SDG 4). The Report is funded by a group of governments, multilateral agencies and foundations. It is an indispensable advocacy tool to support the achievement of SDG 4.

In response to its Advisory Board's call for its outputs and messages to reach policy makers at the country level, the GEM Report has introduced a regional report series, which explores the theme of the global report in a particular region through partnerships. In the case of sub-Saharan Africa, the GEM Report is proposing an adaptation of the regional report concept, the Spotlight report series, which will focus on the theme of universal basic education completion and achievement of foundational learning skills.

The Spotlight series is a new partnership between the GEM Report and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). It will conduct new analysis on the current situation and on the steps taken towards universal basic education completion and foundational learning in Africa to ensure this issue is on top of national and continental policy makers' agendas. Over the next three years, the Spotlight series will cover a dozen countries per year: of these, four focus countries (one per region: West, Central, South and East) will be covered in-depth, while eight countries (two per region) will offer additional insights.

The series will serve as a peer learning and accountability tool to support governments and their partners to take the right decisions, with a focus on equity. It will complement, link and add value to existing analyses and review processes at three levels: national (e.g. education sector analyses, joint sector reviews); regional (esp. those of the African Union and regional economic communities); and global, related to global coordination and financing in education.

The Spotlight series has two goals:
- Synthesize, analyze and clearly present comparative knowledge on challenges and solutions to achieving universal basic education completion and foundational learning in Africa as a basis to support regional peer learning mechanisms and national, regional and global accountability mechanisms.
- Support national and regional coalitions to use this comparative knowledge to move national education systems, plans, policies and budgets – but also international support mechanisms – in the direction of achieving universal basic completion and foundational learning in Africa.

The Spotlight series will deliver three outputs:
- Easy-to-use, evidence-based analysis of selected countries' efforts to achieve universal basic education completion and foundational learning outcomes:
  - four country reports per year; and
  - a regional synthesis report with an emphasis on cross-country and over-time comparisons, drawing on the four country reports and eight more country profiles.
- Support to coalitions and advocacy mechanisms at national level to hold governments and partners to account for the achievement of universal basic education completion and foundational learning outcomes.
- Support to peer learning mechanisms at regional and continental level to help prioritize actions for the achievement of universal basic education completion and foundational learning outcomes.

2. Objective

The objective of this Work is to produce a comprehensive analysis of Niger situation with regard to universal primary completion and foundational learning. This should be done through:
- Desk-based review of literature, data, and evidence
- Consultations with national stakeholders

- Small-scale fieldwork research
- Production of a brief and accessible report on progress towards universal primary completion and foundational learning outcomes in Niger, including two examples of good practices.

The aim of this report is to:
- stimulate an informed and strategic country-led policy dialogue with stakeholders and development partners that leads to tangible actions to address identified issues; and
- be an input to the continental report on basic education completion and foundational learning in Africa.

All country reports in the Spotlight series are based on a common analytical framework and methodology summarized below. A more detailed research guide sets out the proposed tools and processes to inform the country level work and will be made available to the selected firm.

3. Methodology and deliverables

It is envisaged that the activities will be undertaken over 10-12 weeks, leading to the following deliverables:

1. Production of a short inception note detailing the timeline and activities
2. Revision to the common **tools** and protocols, where applicable.
3. A **stakeholder mapping** through the completion of a stakeholder mapping tool.
4. A situational analysis **report**, covering literature review and analysis, and interrogation of data behind plans, policies, strategies and budgets to determine potential priorities and issues.
5. A situational analysis bibliographic package: a copy of policy documents and articles used in the situational analysis should be provided.
6. At least one **national workshop** to complement and validate analysis, receive insights, reach consensus on priority issues, hold collaborative discussions to generate hypotheses on barriers and identify possible solutions and intervention areas for validation and exploration during fieldwork.
7. A **field report and data collection record**, including qualitative transcripts
8. A **draft report**, once fieldwork is completed.
9. A **validation workshop**, where findings are presented to stakeholders.
10. A **final report** (in Word and its accompanying PowerPoint) incorporating feedback from the validation workshop.

In line with the deliverables, the table below outlines the timeframe and activities:

Phase (timeframe)	Deliverables	Activity/Process
Phase 1	**Complete stakeholder mapping** **Literature review and analysis**	- Apply engagement tool to map stakeholders. - Review main texts and document the main features of the system that supports foundational learning. - Summarize key findings in an interim report.
Phase 2	**Stakeholder workshop**	Present interim report and jointly agree on evidence needs and final research focus, selecting some or all of these seven areas: government vision; teaching and learning; teachers; school management; school support and monitoring; community/parental engagement; and learning assessment.
Phase 3	**Research tool adaptation**	Revise tools and protocols, if applicable, drawing on the research guide.
Phase 4	**Research implementation**	Undertake research consisting of: (i) interviews with selected stakeholders; and (ii) fieldwork at district, school and classroom level, covering four districts: two with strong and two with weak results
Phase 5	**Validation workshop**	Draft report synthesizing the main findings and conclusions to present and discuss with government and stakeholders.

Phase 6	Finalization	• Complete final report of up to 15,000 words. • Advise on the integration of Spotlight series findings and recommendations into policy dialogue and review processes.

The GEM Report team will:
- provide (i) selected key data and analysis on completion and learning and (ii) guidelines on the style and structure of the Spotlight country report to ensure that the report is of good quality, comparative, accessible, focused and appealing to decision makers; and
- in partnership with ADEA, facilitate the initial interactions with the national stakeholders
- support quality assurance, including by providing tools and templates to be adapted

4. Requirements

The research team will consist of 3-4 members. A Team Leader will have overall responsibility for stakeholder engagement, workshop facilitation and the final report. S/he should be a respected education practitioner able of leading stakeholder engagement. The other team members will support the process at different levels and will need to have strong analytical and reporting writing skills and considerable experience of facilitation to ensure that their own personal opinions and biases do not influence the responses of stakeholders. They need to have the ability to be 'impartial observers', listening to and respecting stakeholders whose views, opinions and actions they may disagree with. In addition, at least one team member needs to have mastery of quantitative analysis, data collection, storage and sharing.

Interested firms should submit a 3-page proposal with the following information:
- Details of project team including the position and qualifications of team leader and other team members.
- Description of how in-country research capacity and knowledge will be leveraged in order to ensure relevance and buy-in.
- Description of how relevant stakeholders will be engaged throughout the process such that their policy priority needs are appropriately addressed.
- Budget breakdown. Contract awards for similar work range from US$40,000 to US$50,000
- Description of past relevant policy-oriented research experience in Africa, in particular Niger
- Details of potential ethical issues in the relation to proposed research and the steps that will be taken to ensure ethical standards

In terms of selection criteria:

- The firm should have:
  - a strong track record of education research products, including evaluations for bilateral and/or multilateral organizations
  - an office or an ongoing or recent operation in Niger
  - established networks with the education administration and institutions in Niger
- The Team Leader should have:
  - at least 12 years of experience working in the field of international development, preferably in the social sectors, in particular the education sector, advising government
  - experience with quantitative and qualitative research methods
  - ability to analyze information clearly and draw objective conclusions
  - solid understanding of a system approach in education, linking institutional and classroom factors
  - experience engaging with diverse groups of stakeholders and eliciting honest feedback
  - good communication skills, ability to clearly convey high-level concepts in plain language
- Other team members should have:
  - at least 8 years of experience in conducting policy-related research in education and/or other social sectors
  - experience with quantitative or qualitative research methods
- Proficiency in French and English