



Solicitation Number: SOL-367-14-000007

Subject: Solicitation to contract an Early Grade Reading Advisor

Closing Date: February 16, 2014

USAID seeks to contract an Early Grade Reading Advisor to provide USAID/Nepal with a preparatory support in teacher training and coaching, supplemental materials development and partner country coordination to further planning for a new early grade reading program.

The successful offeror will be assigned under a purchase order for the deliverables as described in the Statement of Work (SOW). If awarded, the contractor must complete the deliverables within the final negotiated cost and dates. If you are interested, please provide USAID/Nepal with your proposal at your earliest opportunity, but no later than Monday, February 16, 2014. Your proposal should include the following:

1. Technical Proposal to include Background, Methodology and work plan;
2. Curriculum Vitae and Institutional Profile (if applicable) and contact details of two referees (two pages max each); and
3. Cost Proposal

The attached SOW outlines what USAID/Nepal expects to be accomplished. The final SOW will be included in the official purchase order. This solicitation in no way obligates USAID/Nepal to award a PO/Contract nor does it commit USAID/Nepal to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the proposal. Do not incur any expense or begin work until notified that a contract has been awarded to you, in writing, by the Contracting Officer. Please refer any questions you may have regarding this announcement to OAA, via email at KathmanduSAP@usaid.gov.

Please see the Statement of Work (SOW) and other attachments in the continuation pages.

Attachment: Request for Proposal

STATEMENT OF WORK (SOW): NEPAL EARLY GRADE READING ADVISOR

1. Background

In line with USAID's new Education Strategy, USAID/Nepal is developing a program to help improve reading outcomes in the early grades of primary school.

The education sector in Nepal appears well-managed, with broad government and development partner collaboration around a well-defined School Sector Reform Program (SSRP). The vast majority of external assistance is aligned to the SSRP through a well-coordinated sector wide approach (SWAP). The focus of the SSRP has primarily been on moving Nepal forward towards the EFA goals. The country has made great progress in expanding access and improving equity, however recent review of the SSRP surfaced concern over the quality of education, and in particular whether students are learning to read well-enough in the early grades of basic education.

Related to the growing concern about early grade reading (EGR) in Nepal are several key issues and trends in the education sector. Salient issues include: 1) the issue of the language of instruction for basic education has become paramount, 2) the current curriculum for basic education in Nepal, like in many countries, focuses on language instruction and does not address reading as an explicit subject. Trends being tracked include: 3) Nepal has the advantage of an extensive network of institutions dedicated to teacher training, 4) while there is not at present a systematic approach to measuring learning outcomes in early grades, the government has committed to developing a National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) that *can* include a third grade proficiency test in reading, 5) the political and administrative decentralization that has been taking place progressively since the dissolution of the monarchy in Nepal is changing dramatically the way education is governed, managed and financed, and 6) a substantial funding gap for the SSRP exists following a decreased contribution from the leading donor the Global Partnership for Education, and given this it is highly unlikely that the Ministry of Education (MOE) can afford to take any of the existing reading programs currently offered by a number of INGOs to scale, largely because their input requirements are prohibitively large.

In addition to the above mentioned education specific issues, Nepal is currently engrossed in a significant political transition to a possibly federated state. The uncertainty that remains regarding the exact form of federalism Nepal will choose to implement is creating a great deal of political instability, as evidenced in the repeated

strikes (*bandhs*) occurring during the month of May 2013 and prior to elections in November 2013.

USAID/Nepal's work in education supports the Social, Environmental and Economic Development (SEED) Office where two of the mission's three U.S. development initiatives are being addressed. The Feed the Future Initiative focuses on global food insecurity and sustainably improving agricultural productivity and nutrition. The Global Climate Change Initiative works on adapting to a changing environment and sustainably managing natural resources and biodiversity. SEED also manages energy and economic growth programming.

2. Objectives:

The objective of the assignment will be to provide to the USAID/Nepal Mission

1) an international level early grade reading (EGR) advisor, heretofore known as "Advisor"

2) a local EGR expert

Both experts will substantially contribute to the design of teacher training and materials development components of the USAID/Nepal Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP).

3. Scope:

The Reading Advisor will provide USAID/Nepal with a preparatory support in teacher training and coaching, supplemental materials development and partner country coordination to further planning for a new early grade reading program.

4. Work Requirements:

Task Areas

- 4.01 Hire and Supervise Local EGR Expert
- 4.1 Teacher Training Model
- 4.2 Supplemental Reading Materials Development
- 4.3 Reading Materials Dissemination
- 4.4 Mother Tongue Mapping
- 4.5 Reading Assessment Plan
- 4.6 Review of Recent Analyses
- 4.7 Technical Assistance Plan
- 4.8 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- 4.9 Consultations

Projected Milestones and Completion Dates

Task Number	Work milestones	Projected Completion Date*
4.01	Hire and Supervise Local EGR Expert	March 2014
4.1.1	EGR Teacher Training Draft Model	April/May 2014
4.1.2	EGR Teacher Training Final Model	May 2014
4.1.3	EGR Mainstreaming Plan for Teachers	April 2014
4.1.4	EGR Teacher Competencies and Assessment Plan	April 2014
4.2.1	Decodable and Leveled Readers Lessons Learned	May 2014
4.2.2	Recommendations for Teacher Guides and Student Readers	April 2013
4.3.1	Status Report on National Reading Material Dissemination	June 2014
4.3.2	Reading Materials Dissemination Plan	June 2014
4.4.1	Mother Tongue Mapping	June 2014
4.4.2	Recommendations for EGR for non-Nepali speakers in grades 1-3	June 2014
4.5	Reading Assessment Plan	May 2014
4.6	Review of Recent Analyses	April 2014
4.7	Technical Assistance Plan	May 2014
4.8	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan	June 2014
4.9	Consultations	March-July 2014

*dates provided are the earliest tasks are expected. A firm delivery schedule appears below in section seven.

The Education Sector Advisor shall:

4.01 Hire and Supervise Local EGR Expert

Hire and supervise a local EGR expert to assist in the completion of the above objectives. Responsibility for performance and payment of the local EGR expert is managed by the Advisor.

4.1 Teacher Training Model

Work with appropriate GoN entities, particularly associated central line agencies including the National Centre for Educational Development (NCED), and partners to develop a teacher training model and milestones for introducing early grade reading training into the present teacher training system. Develop a draft and final EGR Teacher Training Model with input from GoN and SEED/Education. To support the implementation of this model, research and plan how EGR can be mainstreamed into the curriculum and teacher support for instruction of EGR. Map the key competency areas for EGR teachers and create a professional development plan for instructors to develop and assess improvement in these select areas.;

4.2 Supplemental Reading Materials Review

Advise appropriate GoN entities, particularly the Curriculum Development Center (CDC), on the creation of supplementary early grade reading materials, per results of

the USAID funded local materials review (January-April 2014). Impart the evidence for decodable and leveled readers and work with the CDC to assess how existing materials can be improved or new material created for grades 1-3. Review teacher guides and student readers to make recommendations as to how they can be improved.

4.3 Reading Materials Dissemination

Create a cost analysis and delivery plan to get reading materials to classrooms in selected target communities two weeks prior to the start of the school year. Building on the local materials review, summarize the status of national EGR material cost and dissemination. Draft a dissemination plan that would ensure delivery of supplemental reading material nationally and highlight challenges/constraints.;

4.4 Mother Tongue Mapping

Assess language of instruction, and spoken mother tongue, in selected mid and far west districts. Identify where non-Nepali language of instruction takes place and where non-Nepali first language students are encountering difficulty to read in Nepali. Map the results and provide a narrative exploring the findings.;

4.5 Reading Assessment Plan

Assist GoN officials in adapting early grade reading assessment locally and advise how EGRA would fit into the present GoN National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) assessment system. Building on the EGRA baseline in February 2014, present an Assessment Plan that would integrate EGR assessment into the current system.;

4.6 Review of Recent Analyses

Review findings from recent Teacher Observation Study and Effective Education Management and Materials Review studies. Contact research teams for consultation as needed.;

4.7 Technical Assistance Plan

Develop a detailed plan for expert technical assistance needed throughout the five-year EGRP. This plan would include recommendations for EGR GoN institutional strengthening across central line agencies, district and sub-district offices.;

4.8 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Develop a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan (which would include frequent EGRA assessments as well as USAID performance and impact evaluations) for the EGRP.;

4.9 Consultations

Conduct meetings, consultations, interviews and field work to perform the tasks above. Request SEED/Education support scheduling meetings when necessary.;

5. Performance Period:

The assignment is effective from o/a April 7, 2014, 2014. The assignment is expected to last for 17 weeks, working five days / week, for a total of no more than eighty-five (85)

work days. During the consultancy, the advisor will work closely with the USAID/Nepal Education Team Leader and Education Specialist as necessary to complete the assigned tasks. Travel in country is projected for no more than thirty-six (36) days during the period of performance.

Anticipated Level of Effort:

Activity	Location	Time (work days)
Advisor		
Meetings	Nepal	20
Field Visits and Data Collection		36
Document Drafting, Review and Completion	Nepal	29
Total		85
Local EGR expert		
Meetings	Nepal	20
Field Visits and Data Collection		36
Document Drafting	Nepal	9
Total		65

6. Reporting Relationships

- The Advisor will report to the USAID/Nepal Education Team Leader. Other appropriate USAID/Nepal offices will provide guidance as necessary.
- The local EGR expert will report to the Advisor. Beyond this, the Advisor has no direct supervision responsibility; however, he/she may be required to lead ad hoc teams, focus groups, high level meetings, etc.

7. Delivery

The Advisor must complete the following deliverables according to the following schedule:

Task Number	Work milestones	Quantity/Media	Completed by
7.01	Hire and Supervise Local EGR Expert	N/A	20 calendar days from start of contract
7.1.1	EGR Teacher Training Draft Model	electronic submission	60
7.1.2	EGR Teacher Training Final Model	electronic submission	75
7.1.3	EGR Mainstreaming Plan for Teachers	electronic submission	30

Task Number	Work milestones	Quantity/Media	Completed by
7.1.4	EGR Teacher Competencies and Assessment Plan	electronic submission	30
7.2.1	Decodable and Leveled Readers Lessons Learned	electronic submission	60
7.2.2	Recommendations for Teacher Guides and Student Readers	electronic submission	30
7.3.1	Status Report on National Reading Material Dissemination	electronic submission	85
7.3.2	Reading Materials Dissemination Plan	electronic submission	85
7.4.1	Mother Tongue Mapping	electronic submission	85
7.4.2	Recommendations for EGR for non-Nepali speakers in grades 1-3	electronic submission	85
7.5	Reading Assessment Plan	electronic submission	60
7.6	Review of Recent Analyses	electronic submission	30
7.7	Technical Assistance Plan	electronic submission	60
7.8	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan	electronic submission	85
7.9	Summary of all Consultations	electronic submission	85

8. Inspection and Acceptance:

All deliverables required here under will be reviewed and approved by the Education Team Leader, SEED, USAID/Nepal. USAID/Nepal will use the following criteria to determine the acceptance of deliverables:

- Timely delivery of all reports before or on the set date of submission;
- All reports or summary documents must fulfill the details of the task outlined in section four;
- Reports incorporate GoN central line agency available information and planning;
- Reports incorporate USAID/Nepal comments in all final drafts.

9. Contract Type and Payment Schedule

USAID/Nepal will offer a fixed Price Contract/Purchase Order with the following schedule for payments. ***Payments from USAID/Nepal to the Contractor are based on the completion and acceptance of the deliverables described in section seven.***

USAID/Nepal will provide payments within 30 days after receipt of vouchers and acceptance of the following deliverables. The Contractor shall submit a request letter along with the “Public Voucher SF- 1034” to the Office of the Controller (OC) for payment indicating the purchase order number and description of services. OC, pursuant to FAR Clause 52.232.25 “Prompt Payment”, will make payment close to 30 days. Vouchers for payment will be submitted on the following schedule.

After approximately 30 calendar days: 25% of contract total will be paid after receipt of a voucher and acceptance by the Education Team Leader and Education Specialist, of the following evidences.

- 7.01 Hire and Supervise Local EGR Expert
- 7.1.3 EGR Mainstreaming Plan for Teachers
- 7.1.4 EGR Teacher Competencies and Assessment Plan
- 7.2.1 Recommendations for Teacher Guides and Student Readers
- 7.6 Review of Recent Analyses

After approximately 60 calendar days: 25% of contract total will be paid after receipt of a voucher and acceptance by the Education Team Leader, of the following evidence.

- 7.1.1 EGR Teacher Training Draft Model
- 7.1.2 EGR Teacher Training Final Model
- 7.2.1 Decodable and Leveled Readers Lessons Learned
- 7.5 Reading Assessment Plan
- 7.7 Technical Assistance Plan

After approximately 100 calendar days: 50% of contract total will be paid after receipt of a voucher and acceptance by the Education Team Leader and Education Specialist, of the following evidences.

- 7.3.1 Status Report on National Reading Material Dissemination
- 7.3.2 Reading Materials Dissemination Plan
- 7.4.1 Mother Tongue Mapping
- 7.4.2 Recommendations for EGR for non-Nepali speakers in grades 1-3
- 7.8 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- 7.9 Consultation Summary

10. Required Qualifications for the international EGR expert:

- Education: Master's degree or equivalent degree required.
- Experience:
 1. At least 10 years experience related to literacy and improving early grade reading skills
 2. Experience working directly with government and donor representatives in planning and programming
 3. Working on interdisciplinary and/or multi-cultural team environments
 4. Fluency in spoken and written English
 5. Strong English writing skills
 6. Strong interpersonal skills
- Knowledge:
 1. Knowledge of early grade reading principles
 2. Knowledge of teacher training/coaching
 3. Knowledge of monitoring and evaluation
 4. Knowledge of reading materials development
 5. Knowledge of team building, mentoring, and coaching

Note – Hiring of the local EGR expert is the responsibility of the advisor. Minimum qualifications of the local expert will be left up to the Advisor.

11. Selection Criteria

Successful applicant will be selected through a review of the proposal and curricula vitae provided. Technical proposal will be more important than cost in the best value decision however the cost proposal submitted by the offerors will also be an important factor in determining the best value.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the proposals:

- (50%) A sound technical proposal demonstrating extensive knowledge of early grade reading issues in developing countries, especially Nepal.
- (30%) Demonstrated experience with education programming in developing countries.
- (20%) Demonstrated experience collaborating with host country organizations and country governments and international donors.

12. Source and Nationality Requirements for Procurement of Commodities and Services Financed by USAID

Foreign Assistance Act Section 604(a) authorizes procurement “from the United States, recipient country or developing countries,” which is implemented by 22 CFR Part 228 and USAID's Automated Directives System Chapter 310 ("ADS 310"). The authorized source for this procurement is Geographic Code 937, as defined in ADS 310. Suppliers with a nationality outside of the United States, the recipient country or developing countries will only be considered for this procurement if a waiver is authorized under 22 CFR Part 228 Subpart D.

13. Contractor Registration

All prospective U.S. Government contractors are required to obtain a DUNS number and to complete the System for Award Management (SAM) registration before a contract may be awarded. To learn more and to begin the registration process, please visit the following websites:

DUNS number: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM registration: <http://www.sam.gov>

Proposals may be submitted under this RFP without a DUNS number or SAM registration. However, the successful awardee will be required to obtain both of them and submit evidence of registration to USAID before an award is made. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, Offerors are encouraged to obtain them early so that, if selected, the award will not be delayed.

Completion of an early registration does not constitute any commitment on the part of the U.S. Government to make an award.

14. Proposal Submission Instructions

Proposal length not to exceed five pages, with additional pages for budget, curriculum vitae of key personnel involved in the process in MS Word/Excel/PowerPoint format.

The proposal should include following:

1. Background
2. Methodology
3. Detailed activities and work plan
4. Curriculum Vitae and Institutional Profile (if applicable) and contact details of two referees (two pages max each)*
5. Cost proposal, preferably using the template (Annex II)*

**not counted against page limit*

Proposals and signed non-disclosure agreement (Annex I) are due within 21 days from the date of the released solicitation. Interested Offerors must submit five hard bound copies of the proposal and one bound copy of the cost proposal as well as email an electronic copy in MS Word and MS Excel format to: KathmanduSAP@usaid.gov.

Hard copies of proposals must be hand delivered and received by the deadline. All mail is subject to U.S. Embassy electronic imagery scanning methods, physical inspection, and is not date and time stamped prior to receipt by USAID/Nepal, OAA and may delay receipt of the proposal. Hard copies must be sent to the following address:

Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA)
USAID/Nepal
U.S. Embassy
G.P.O. Box 295 Maharajgunj
Kathmandu, Nepal

15. ANNEX I:

Signed Non-Disclosure Agreement must be submitted with proposal.

PRECLUSION FROM FURNISHING CERTAIN SERVICES AND RESTRICTION ON USE OF INFORMATION

With respect to proposal submitted dated _____ in response to solicitation of USAID/Nepal's mid-term and final evaluation of _____ dated _____, the undersigned hereby agrees and certifies to the following:

- (a) This SOW calls for the Contractors to furnish important services in support of the mid-term and final evaluation of the _____. In accordance with the principles of FAR Subpart 9.5 and USAID policy, the Contractor shall be ineligible to furnish, as a prime or subcontractor or otherwise, implementation services under any contract or task order that results in response to findings, proposals, or recommendations in the evaluation reports within 18 months of USAID accepting the reports, unless the head of the contracting activity, in consultation with USAID's competition advocate, authorizes a waiver (in accordance FAR 9.503) determining that preclusion of the Contractor from the implementation work would not be in the Government's interest.
- (b) In addition, by accepting this contract, the Contractor agrees that it will not use or make available any information obtained about another organization under the contract in the preparation of proposals or other documents in response to any solicitation for a contract or task order.
- (c) If the Contractor gains access to proprietary information of any other company in performing this evaluations, the Contractor must agree with the other company to protect the information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary, and must refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished. Contractor must provide a properly executed copy of all such agreements to the contracting officer.

Signature: _____

Name Typed or Printed: _____

Date: _____

16. Annex II: Budget template

Budget and Justification (Please do not exceed two pages)				
Budget category totals	Unit	Rate	Total US\$	Remarks
a. Personnel costs Team Leader Local Expert				
b. Travel and per-diem i) International travel Air-fare Per-diem Ground transportation (airport tax, local taxi etc) ii) Local travel (field trips) Air-fare Per-diem Ground transportation (airport tax, local taxi etc)				
c. Other Direct Cost Other Costs (If any)				
d. Total Direct Costs (Total of above 4 lines "a-c")				
e. Indirect cost (if applicable)				
f. Total cost (d+e)				

Budget Justification narrative:

- Personnel costs :
- Travel and per-diem:
- Other direct cost:
- Indirect cost: