



Call for Proposal (Institution/Organization)

The preparation of background paper on equity and inclusion in education, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations for the 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Education Ministerial Conference (APREMC-II)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Type of contract: Contract for Services

Duration: 15 September 2021 to 30 December 2021, tentatively (14 weeks)

Closing date: 7 September 2021, 17h00 Bangkok time (GMT +7:00)

1. Objective

The main purpose of this assignment is to develop the thematic background paper and policy brief on equity and inclusion in education which summarizes global and regional trends as well as highlights existing and emerging issues, challenges, needs and opportunities post-COVID-19 as well as recommendations based on lessons learnt on how to build back equal.

2. Background

Under the commitment to ensure 'inclusive and equitable quality education' and promote 'lifelong learning for all' as part of the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), the Asia-Pacific region has made a significant progress in terms of both access and quality of education. However, millions of children from disadvantaged groups are kept out or pushed out of education systems through decisions leading to exclusion from curricula, irrelevant learning objectives, stereotyping in textbooks, discrimination in resource allocation and assessments, tolerance of violence and neglect of needs. In addition, the prolonged school closure during the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the pre-existing inequalities and stalled global progress to meet the promise of 'leave no one behind'.

With the building back better framework, education recovery and reform should focus on creating learning environment which not only takes into consideration but takes advantage of diversity among students which will lead to positive impact on student performance. Within this context, the 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Education Ministers' Conference (APREMC-II) will be organized to review and take stock of the first 6 years of progress towards SDG 4 - Education 2030 in Asia and the Pacific; identify challenges in progressing towards SDG 4 in the region, including the impact of COVID-19 and the COVID-19 response and priority areas of action; and discuss and agree on a regional strategy and roadmap to accelerate progress during the next years, with a focus on sustainable post-COVID-19 education recovery and educational reform. Equity and inclusion in education is one of key topics for thematic debates. To facilitate the discussion leading towards enhancing Member States' understanding and capacity to implement, monitor and report on SDG target 4.5, the thematic background paper aims to:

- Provide and discuss some insights into inclusive education in the Asia-Pacific region under the framework of building back better;
- Clarify and create a shared understanding of the definition, strategies and monitoring issues regarding SDG targets 4.5;
- Identify key issues, needs and opportunities related to inclusive education, particularly related to those most disadvantaged and marginalized, and highlight a number of important relevant policy issues in the region; and
- Provide recommendation or strategies to transform education systems to be more inclusive and equitable for marginalized children, adolescents, and young people.

3. Work Assignment

Under the overall authority of the Director of UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, the direct supervision and overall guidance of the Chief of Section Inclusive Quality Education (IQE), and daily guidance of the Team Leader of Inclusive Basic Education (IBE), the contractor is expected to perform the following tasks:

1. Prepare the annotated outline of the thematic paper to be agreed by UNESCO;
2. Compile and collate the relevant information and documents to be used for the preparation of the paper;
3. Conduct a literature review related to the relevant topic areas to be reflected and referred in the paper;
4. Prepare the draft paper (no more than 30 pages) based on the agreed outline and share it with UNESCO for further consultation and feedback;
5. Revise the draft paper based on the feedback and inputs received from UNESCO;
6. Based on the draft paper, prepare the draft policy brief (no more than 4 pages);
7. Finalize the paper and the policy brief by incorporating the feedback and inputs received from UNESCO;
8. Submit the finalized paper along with relevant references, further readings and annexes; and
9. Based on the finalized paper, prepare the PowerPoint presentation (not more than 20 slides) synthesizing the key highlights of the paper.

4. Deliverables and Timeframe

The timeframe for the assignment is limited. The assignment will take place between September 2021 and December 2021. The indicative timetable of key deliverables is shown below.

Deliverable	Date
Annotated outline	20 September 2021
Draft background paper (no more than 30 pages without ANNEX)	10 October 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised background paper • Draft policy brief (no more than 4 pages) • Draft of financial statement for the use of UNESCO's contribution to the entire work assignment 	10 November 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final background paper 	10 December 2021

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final policy brief • PowerPoint presentation synthesizing the key highlights of the paper • Certified financial statement for the use of UNESCO's contribution to the entire work assignment 	
--	--

5. Duration of Contract

The contractor will be required to work for a period of 14 weeks during 15 September 2021 to 30 December 2021, tentatively.

6. Location and Travel

Given the current sanitary restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no consultant or consultant team member will be expected to travel unless travel is a safe option and fully authorized by the relevant authorities.

7. Qualifications or specialized knowledge/experience required

The firm/entity should possess the following mandatory qualifications and experience:

- It is mandatory for a Firm/Entity to have a minimum of five years of regional experience in inclusive education in Asia-Pacific, and inclusive education policy issues (Please indicate all prior projects in previous experience and provide reference).
- It is mandatory for the Firm/Entity to have successfully implemented a minimum of three regional projects in the field of inclusive education
- Demonstrated experiences in analyzing and synthesizing research as well as policy and legal documents
- Knowledge and experience regarding the relevance of inclusion in education in the context of (regional/national) development

The recommended composition of the consultant team includes two to three core members, i.e. one team leader and/or one senior consultant and a junior level consultant. Note that alternative team compositions will also be considered.

The consultant(s) should possess the following mandatory qualifications and experience. Not meeting these mandatory criteria will disqualify a proposal:

Team Leader and/or Senior members of the team from the firm/ institution must have:

- University degree at master's level or equivalent in areas relevant to the evaluation such as education, social sciences, political sciences, economics, or any related field
- At least 7 years of professional experience in conducting professional/academic research related to inclusive education in the Asia-Pacific region

- Understanding and knowledge of the UN mandates and its programming in relevant areas in the framework of the Sustainable Development Agenda, and in particular the SDG4 – Education 2030 Agenda
- Understanding and application of UN mandates in Human Rights and Gender Equality
- Excellent communication, analytical and demonstrated excellent drafting skills in English

Other team members (junior consultant) must have:

- An advanced university degree in education, social sciences, political sciences, economics, or any related field or other related field
- At least 5 years of professional experience in a field related to education, inclusive education, especially in the Asia-Pacific region
- Excellent oral communication and demonstrated excellent report writing skills in English

The proposed team members should collectively have the following mandatory qualifications:

- At least two examples of work experience in the UN or experience with assignments for the UN in the framework of the Sustainable Development Agenda, in particular relevant to the framework of the Agenda 2030 and SDG 4

The following qualifications collectively across all team members will be considered an advantage:

- At least three examples of professional work experience in developing countries, particularly in Asia and the Pacific
- At least three examples of experience in gender equality and gender-sensitive approaches
- At least three examples Knowledge and understanding of the needs of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups
- Knowledge and experience regarding the relevance of inclusion in the context of (regional/national) development
- Experience in analyzing and synthesizing research as well as policy and legal documents

Verification of these qualifications will be based on the provided curriculum vitae. Moreover, references, web links or electronic copies of two or three examples of recently completed assignments should be provided together with the technical proposal.

8. Application

Interested institutions are invited to submit the following in writing to UNESCO Bangkok:

- Proposal:** Description of the firm/institution and its qualifications: Please include evidence to support that mandatory and desirable requirements, as outlined below, are met. This evidence should include a record of international education development experience, references of previous clients, and at least one sample of previous work related to education or other social sector policy, planning and finance from an international perspective.

- Proposed Approach, Methodology, workplan, timeframe, deliverables and schedules: The proposal should consider the key activities as per TOR based on the Firm/Institution's own interpretation as well as strategies in achieving the expected outcomes and stakeholders to be involved in the different activities. The proposal should include realistic workplan with specific treatment of key deliverables and priorities and also clear repartition of tasks amongst team member.
- ii. **Proposed Personnel:** Please include complete CVs for each proposed team member to support qualification requirements as listed under Qualification/Experience requirement. The team should combine of a team leader (Lead consultant or senior specialist) and team members.
 - iii. **Price proposal:** Please provide detailed cost breakdown, Costs associated with carrying out the regional study, such as printing, office supplies, and any required hardware, should be included in the price proposal.

Your application should be submitted no later than **7 September 2021, 17h00 Bangkok time** (GMT +7:00) to the attention of:
Chief, IQE Section
UNESCO Bangkok Office
E-mail: iqe.bgk@unesco.org