

**Terms of Reference (ToR) for National Consultant**

**TOR FOR EVALUATION OF “UNINTERRUPTED ACCESS TO TEACHING-LEARNING FOR HARD-TO-REACH AND DIGITALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN IN BHUTAN”**



**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020**

**Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, and HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation**

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## 1. Introduction/Background

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When schools across Bhutan were closed in March 2020 as a preventive measure against COVID-19, the Ministry of Education switched to using internet and TV-based learning, a response which is a big step in Bhutan's education system and highly beneficial. It required not only changing the means of education but also making adaptations in the curriculum. However, this left out about 17,000 students mainly in rural and remote areas with no access to the internet and TV. Therefore, separate responses for them was necessary. Within this context, HELVETAS Bhutan received a mandate from a special COVID-19 and Education funding window launched by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) to support the Ministry of Education of Bhutan to enable continuation of learning for digitally disadvantaged students.

The overall goal of the project is "to enhance inclusion and equity in basic education through targeted solutions for the hard-to-reach, and digitally disadvantaged children and youth in Bhutan." The Project focused on 3 interlinked results: reducing barriers to learning caused by unequal access to digital technologies, strengthening the quality of digital learning, and increasing future preparedness to provide equitable access to learning. Towards this, the major activities carried out were adaptation and distribution of self-learning materials, development and airing of TV and radio-based education programs, training of teachers, and establishing partnerships with IT firms and media stations for the future continuity of ICT based learning in the education system. The design of the learning activities aimed to promote self-engagement and independent learning. The lesson from the current online teaching-learning methods, adaption and distribution of self-instructional materials, radio lessons, partnership approach and capacity building shall form the basis for development of replication plan.

The main implementation partner was the Ministry of Education of the Royal Government of Bhutan and partner schools. Local ICT firms and TV and radio stations were engaged to convert learning into visual formats and radio programs, and to broadcast these regularly.

The duration of the Project was from June 2020 – March 2021. It was foreseen during the planning of the Project that an external Project Review would be conducted to assess results and approaches, and to document lessons. Hence, the services of a national consultant will be sought to carry out an independent review.

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## 2. Purpose

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The main purpose of the review is to determine whether intended targets of the Project have been met and to what extent these results are linked to the Ministry of Education's overall pandemic response and future plans, and on documenting lesson learnt as a basis to develop a replication plan by the Ministry of Education.

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## 3. Objectives

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The overall objectives of the review are two-fold:

- To assess the (a) relevance (as a response to access to education during the COVID-19 pandemic), (b) efficiency (whether the design and implementation approaches were the most efficient also considering the pandemic context), (c) effectiveness (achievements based on Project targets as outlined in the logframe), and (d) sustainability (measures taken to ensure certain continuity of initiatives supported by the Project).

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- To document main lessons learnt from the implementation of the project. This will feed into the development of a replication plan by the Ministry of Education.

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## 4. Evaluation Scope

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The review will cover the entire period of the Project (i.e. from June 2020 until end of March 2021). It will focus on meeting the review objectives by focusing on the following areas: result achievements; implementation strategy and approaches; partnership; lesson learning, and uptake plans of the partner Ministry of Education . Stakeholders from the government, schools, and private service providers will be covered.

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## 5. Broad Evaluation Question

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Based on the above-mentioned purpose and objectives of the evaluation, the study shall cover but not be limited to the following evaluation questions;

- Relevance: To what extent has the Project contributed to the overall aims of the Ministry of Education to reach disadvantaged students during the pandemic?
- How consistent are the project's interventions with the needs of the primary stakeholders (i.e. partner schools and disadvantaged students)?

Effectiveness:

- Did the project achieve the intended results as per the project document?
- What have been the main factors supporting or constraining the achievement of planned results?
- Were the strategies adopted appropriate for the achievements of results?
- Has the partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?

Efficiency:

- Have planned activities and outputs been implemented and achieved on time and within the allocated resources? If not, what have been constraining factors?

Sustainability:

- Are there evidence that initiatives taken through the Project or contributed towards by the Project will continue?
- What were the major lessons learnt?
- What are key recommendations for follow-up actions?

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## 6. Methodology/Approaches

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The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. Although a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative methods are recommended, the actual method shall be determined by the evaluation design matrix to be prepared by the evaluation team. The evaluation matrix should clearly outline sub-questions of the evaluation, type of questions, measures and indicators, data sources, data and information collection instruments and analysis tools.

The evaluation team must propose clear methodology based on evaluation matrix to achieve the purpose and objectives of evaluation.

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The perspectives of not only implementing partners and service providers, but the primary stakeholders or ultimate beneficiaries will be paramount.

The proposal will be evaluated based on technical weightage 70% and financial 30%. The overall estimated cost of the evaluation is Nu. 5,00,000 (Five Hundred Thousand only)

a. Overall Management

Representatives of the Policy and Planning Division (PPD) under Ministry of Education and HELVETAS shall form the management team. The management team shall coordinate the overall evaluation activities. The evaluation team shall report any matter concerning evaluation activities to the management team.

b. Evaluator

A national consulting firm shall be hired to evaluate the Project.

The consulting firm must present the following qualifications:

- Professional background related to evaluation of projects and programs;
- Proven experience in evaluation of Projects;
- Experience in results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies;
- Ability to deliver quality reports within the given time;
- Fluency in English is required;
- Excellent writing skills;
- Subject expertise shall be an advantage.

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## **7. Proposal Content**

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The Proposal shall include but not limited to the following;

1. Draft outline of the Evaluation Report
2. Proposed Methodology of the evaluation.
3. Financial Proposal for a period of maximum 20 days.
4. Workplan

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## **8. Deliverables and Schedule**

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The total duration of the evaluation starting from the date of signing of the contract to submission of final evaluation report will be for a maximum of 20 days spread over a period of 45 days. The Report should:

- Include an executive summary
- Be analytical in nature
- Be structured around achievements, issues and related findings
- Include a separate chapter on Lessons Learnt (as a basis for a Replication Plan)
- Include recommendations (focusing on sustaining initiatives supported by the Project)

The schedule for deliverables will be as follows;

Deliverable	Content	Submission/Presentation To:	Timeframe (Tentative)	Completion Date
(Preparation and Presentation)	1. Proposed Methodology of the evaluation; and 2. Workplan	MoE and HELVETAS		
Field visits, interviews, desk reviews and analysis				
De-briefing of the initial draft evaluation report	Initial findings of the study	MoE and HELVETAS		
Submission and Presentation of the draft study report	Full report with annexes	MoE, SDC, Helvetas and other key stakeholders		
Final draft study report	Full report with annexes  ** Along with the final evaluation report, submit all record of discussion and rationale, administered questionnaires, raw and cleaned data, pictures and other documentations related to study			

\*\*Timeline will be agreed between Ministry of Education, Helvetas and Consultancy Firm

**Reference Documents:**

1. Project Document (can be obtained from Helvetas and MoE)
2. Administrative data and documents from Ministry of Education
  - a. Education in Emergency
  - b. E-learning video lessons
  - c. Self-Instructional Materials
  - d. Education in Emergencies- Prioritized and Curriculum
  - e. Report on Self Instructional Materials
  - f. Other relevant documents

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