Information for Development Program

Request for Expressions of Interest

Education Management Information Systems:
Case Studies and Lessons Learned

Country: International – with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and countries facing the greatest challenges in meeting Education For All and Gender Equity goals as outlined in the Millennium Development Goals

Notice/Contract Number: 1253

Publication Date: 17 June 2005

Deadline: 9 July 2005

Funding Agency: infoDev

Implementing Organization: infoDev

Eligibility of Bidders: The Consultant is expected to be a team of experts in the area of education management information systems, especially in developing countries. Key staff will include personnel with demonstrated expertise and at least eight years’ experience working with (1) the challenges, needs and realities of the education sector in a variety of developing countries, especially the least developed (2) management information systems, and their use in the education sector in developing countries.

Request For Expressions of Interest (EOI):

infoDev invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing expert services to develop Education Management Information Systems. (EMIS): Case Studies and Lessons Learned.

The main objective of this assignment is to develop a reference guide for policymakers and donor staff working in the education sector in developing countries exploring best practices and lessons learned related to the for planning for, implementing, using and maintaining education management information systems (EMIS) in support of their development objectives.

The work involved in this assignment is schedule to be completed within ~ 5 months from the date of signing the contract agreement within an available lump-sum budget of $125,000, which includes all fees, travel, and additional related expenses.
Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.

For this assignment, we specifically request the submission of a 5-8 page note that provides in greater detail how the consultants would conduct this assignment if selected. The note should include the following: (i) an analytical framework and a process by which the research will be conducted; (ii) a timeline that demonstrates the consultants ability to meet the deadlines as noted in the Terms of Reference below; (iii) a brief narrative on resource allocation; and (iv) brief summaries of key personnel to be involved in the work, particularly their experience that directly relates to needs of this study. Please note that, while case study sites may be proposed in the EOI, final selection of case studies will be made in close consultation with infoDev. In order to prepare the note, interested consultants should review the Terms of Reference, which is provided below. We suggest that the Expression of Interest, including the 5-8 page note, should not exceed 25 pages in length.

Selection will be based on the “Consultants Qualifications” (CQ) method of procurement and Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers May 2004 (current edition). Electronic submission of the Expression of Interest, including the 5-8 page note, paper, is preferred. The EOI should be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word or PDF file. Deadline for submission: 9 July, 2005, 11:59pm Washington, DC time.

Interested consultants may obtain further information on the infoDev web site at http://www.infodev.org/education or at the address below from 10am to 5pm US Eastern Time.

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Note: More information about World Bank procurement processes and guidelines can be found on its Procurement web site at http://www.worldbank.org/procurement.
TERMS OF REFERENCE

ICTs to Benefit EFA & Education-Related MDGs

Education Management Information Systems (EMIS):
Case Studies and Lessons Learned

Background:

ICTs are widely believed to be important potential levers to introduce and sustain education reform efforts. Despite evidence of increasingly widespread use of ICTs in education initiatives around the world, however, there is little guidance available for policy makers and donor staff specifically targeted at countries contemplating the use of ICTs to help countries meet the education-related Millennium Development Goals.

Over forty World Bank education projects over the last four years have had components related to the development of education management information systems (EMIS), but little is known about best practices and lessons learned from such investments. While EMIS are perhaps the least glamorous types of ICT-related investments in education, they appear to be the most often deployed used of ICTs in large donor-funded the education sector. The sheer number and magnitude of such investments, combined with a lack of rigorous studies on their implementation and effectiveness, points to a potential for waste and inefficiencies. It is estimated that over half of large ICT-related projects fail in the corporate sector in OECD countries, and that such rates are even higher in the public sector in developing countries. Indeed, anecdotal evidence suggests that EMIS in World Bank projects, as well as those supported by other donors, are often behind schedule and/or have to be significantly re-worked. Given the seeming ubiquity of their use in donor-funded projects and the absence of useful planning materials, case studies on EMIS planning and deployment, as well as best practices and lessons learned, would be useful planning tools for donor staff and educational policymakers. Just as a liquid changes shape to fit the receptacle into which it's poured, so too should an EMIS fit the particular environment into which it is introduced. This is especially the case in countries struggling to meet EFA and education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, which typically have great needs related to data collection, analysis and dissemination, but limited experience with and capacity for the effective use of EMIS.

The effective use of EMIS can be confounded by a variety of social and cultural factors. Some governments complain that EMIS are imposed by donors more as control mechanisms than as tools for learning and effective planning. Local governmental authorities may have similar complaints about their participation in EMIS managed by a central governmental authority, especially where there is no history of (and trust for) sharing information and receiving anything useful in return. Management information systems in the education sector are often designed by technical people, ignorant of prevailing educational policies and with insufficient input from education specialists, as stand-alone systems, not integrated with information systems in other parts of government. It should be noted that integration with other systems and planning mechanisms may be increasingly critical where donors are moving toward sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) to enhance their cooperation and collaboration.
Scope of work:

In general, this study will explore answers to the following basic question:

- What are the best practices for implementing education management information systems (EMIS) to improve planning, organizational efficiencies, data collection and analysis, information sharing and transparency in the education sector, especially as these activities may relate to helping meet objectives related to Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)?

More specifically, the study should explore:

(1) synthesized guidelines, lessons learned and ‘best’ practices for policymakers related to the planning for, development and sustainability of education management information systems (EMIS) based on the existing knowledge base and illustrated by
(2) at least two in-depth case studies of EMIS implementation in ICT in education initiatives in developing countries, with particular attention to
(3) a variety of common issues, especially the special and specific issues that arise because of the particular circumstances faced by countries eligible to participate in the Fast Track Initiative, such as those related but not limited to:
   a. developmental objectives and monitoring and evaluation needs;
   b. thinking about and planning for the use of ICTs in the context of education reform;
   c. existing policy planning processes and institutional capacity, including intra-governmental planning and coordination;
   d. cultural and social contexts, especially those related to information sharing;
   e. a shared vision, and related communication strategies;
   f. technology choices: buy it 'off-the-shelf' or 'home-grown'?;
   g. technological 'lock-in' (including discussion of open source);
   h. costs and budgeting, including total cost of ownership;
   i. data context, integration and sharing;
   j. contracting, outsourcing and public-private sector partnerships;
   k. enabling/disabling environments;
   l. existing and necessary technology and connectivity infrastructure;
   m. human resources, training and capacity building;
   n. media, community and civil society outreach;
   o. decentralization;
   p. legal and regulatory issues;
   q. EFA and education-related MDG issues, including gender, access to education, HIV-AIDS, and equity issues;
   r. other capacity constraints.

Analysis and recommendations should be supported by hard data and evidence from specific implementations of ICTs in education. Emphasis should be placed on the effective and appropriate use of EMIS to inform decision-making processes, and not as simple data collection mechanisms. Case studies should include examples of how EMIS can be used to inform policy making at all levels and promote transparency, with attention to who gains access to what data in what formats at what levels of government/civil society. Sample terms of reference for various tasks related to the planning for,
as well as the implementation, maintenance and expansion of EMIS, should be included in an appendix, including criteria checklists by which to assess current EMIS systems as well as the development of new systems.

The guidelines and recommendations contained in this study should be specifically relevant to the particular resource constraints and challenges faced by countries at most risk of not meeting MDG targets.

The primary audience for this study is policy makers in countries eligible to participate in the Fast Track Initiative and their partners in donor agencies. However, the study’s exploration of issues related to the use (and misuse) of EMIS should be of great interest to a broader audience: in developing countries currently on-track to meet EFA goals but pursuing large scale investments in ICTs in their educational systems, as well as within donor agencies and in the broader ICT and development communities, and especially for firms involved in providing EMIS-related equipment and services to these groups.

The format and usability of this study are of critical importance. The analysis and recommendations contained in this study must be presented in a manner that allows busy policymakers and donor staff to make informed policy decisions on specific issues related to the suitability of a variety of ICTs to help address a variety of pressing policy concerns. Content should not be limited to descriptions of issues and discussions of potential ways to approach these issues – any such discussions must be directly relevant to this topic and lead to actionable advice. The final product should be easy to use divided into separate themed sections and modules, as appropriate.

This study is one in a series of publications for policymakers commissioned by infoDev focusing on issues related to the appropriate use of ICTs in education to help countries meet the Millennium Development Goals. More information about other publications in this series is available at http://www.infodev.org/education.

Consultant qualifications

The consulting firm should have experts in the area of education management information systems, especially in developing countries. Key staff will include personnel with demonstrated expertise and at least eight years’ experience working with (1) the challenges, needs and realities of the education sector in a variety of developing countries, especially the least developed (2) management information systems, and their use in the education sector in developing countries.

Deliverables

1. Preliminary workplan – 10 days after signature of grant agreement with infoDev (“Effective Date”)
2. First draft of study – ~2.5 months from Effective Date
3. Review workshop – ~ 4 months from Effective Date.
3. Final version of study – ~4.5 months from Effective Date

The consultants will also be expected to participate in a review workshop in Washington, DC (or in a regional hub, if infoDev and the consultants jointly agree that an alternative venue is preferable) to receive expert reactions to the draft study shortly after the submission of the draft.
**Tentative Timeline**

The study, including a review workshop, is expected to take ~ 5 months.

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Publication of request for expressions of interest (EOI)</td>
<td>17 June 2005</td>
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<td>Deadline for submission of EOI</td>
<td>9 July 2005</td>
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<td>Preparation of shortlist</td>
<td>12 July 2005</td>
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<td>Request technical and financial proposal</td>
<td>19 July 2005</td>
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<td>Announcement of winning proposal</td>
<td>1 August 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant signing</td>
<td>8 August 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary Workplan due to infoDev</td>
<td>22 August 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>First draft of study completed and submitted</td>
<td>22 October 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review workshop</td>
<td>late November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final version submitted to infoDev</td>
<td>31 December 2005</td>
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**Indicative budget envelope**

Available lump-sum budget of $125,000 which includes all costs (fees, travel, and additional related expenses, etc.).

**About infoDev**

The Information for Development Program (*infoDev*) is an international consortium of official bilateral and multilateral development agencies and other key partners, facilitated by an expert Secretariat housed at the World Bank. Its mission is to help developing countries and their partners in the international community use information and communication technologies (ICT) effectively and strategically as tools to combat poverty, promote sustainable economic growth, and empower individuals and communities to participate more fully and creatively in their societies and economies. *infoDev* pursues this mission through an integrated set of programs financed by its consortium members and administered by the *infoDev* Secretariat in active cooperation with all members and other key strategic partners, public and private. Its work is rooted in the conviction that information and communication are indispensable elements of effective and responsive institutions (including governments), markets and societies.

**Contact Information**

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