A. Background and context

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has led many countries to close all the education institutions in an attempt to reduce and, in some cases, contain the spread of the novel coronavirus. The pandemic has interrupted classroom learning for at least 9 out of 10 students worldwide.

UNESCO, in the COVID-19 briefing notes, a Global Crisis for Teaching and Learning reports that 191 countries have closed all their schools, affecting 1.5 billion students from pre-primary to tertiary education and 63 million teachers. The report also notes that almost half of all students affected worldwide face barriers to online learning during school closures. This phenomenon is more pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa for the known reasons of low economic and technological development. Online learning entails as a pre-requisite, access to internet, computers and mobile devices like cell phones. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 86% (216 million) learners do not have a household computer, 82% (199 million) learners do not have household internet and 11% (26 million) learners are not covered by mobile networks.

Countrywide school closures across SSA means that at least 251,210,311 affected learners are unable to gain access to education, of which 20,786,639 are of pre-primary school age, 164,469,692 are of primary school age, 57,706,918 are in secondary school and 8,207,062 are enrolled at tertiary institutions, leading to learning crisis. The crisis is directly impacting the ability of young children, adolescents, youth and adults to continue their learning journey and as such pose a major threat to the achievement of the already challenging Sustainable Development Goal 4. UNESCO’s monitoring shows that over 87% of pupils in more than 165 countries have been affected by this disruption. While high-income countries are adapting existing online platforms - such as Zoom – for distance learning, this technology works best for upper grades and for contexts where internet connectivity is not a major constraint. Low-income countries and countries with low connectivity coverage will have to resort to other alternative sources of distance learning in order to limit school-closure related losses and reduce the already existing learning inequalities that disproportionately affect vulnerable children and youth.

In Uganda, there are over 15 million learners enrolled in the education system in addition to about 600,000 learners in schools in the refugee settlements. In response to the danger posed by the pandemic to Uganda learners, the government announced the closure of all schools and educational institutions since 20th March 2020 in a bid to avoid the possible rapid spread of new infections of COVID-19. This measure resulted in the closure of more than 73,200 schools and institutions affecting more than 15,100,000 learners and 548,000 teachers. This has disrupted the normal teaching and learning process.

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1 UNESCO Covid-19 Education Response, Education Sector Issue Notes 7.1, April 2020
2 UNESCO Institute for Statistics Database 2020
The Ministry of Education has under the covid-19 education response plan rolled out a number of measures to support continuity of learning, including using online platforms.

The UNESCO – Teachers Task Force in its ‘Call to action’, recommends providing adequate professional support and training to teachers to ensure that learning continues. Through the UNESCO Capacity Development for Education Project (CapEd) for Uganda under the supervision of the UNESCO Multi-sectoral Regional office in Nairobi which seeks to “Strengthen national capacities in Uganda to plan and manage the teaching profession”, and in collaboration with UNESCO’s Institute for Capacity Development in Africa (UNESCO-IICBA), based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is undertaking an assessment of In-service Teachers’ Skills and Competencies in the use of ICTs for Teaching and Learning, whose results will lead to the development and moderation of an Online Course for Teachers.

UNESCO’s Institute for Capacity Development in Africa (UNESCO-IICBA), based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia is UNESCO’s Category I Institute established by the UNESCO General Conference in 1999, mandated to strengthen teacher policy and development in Africa. And is supporting the countries to strengthening of skills and competencies in-service teachers in the use of ICTs for Teaching and Learning aims at promoting and improving the quality and diversity of ICT use towards the achievement of learning outcomes amidst the critical challenges that teachers and learners are facing with the Covid19 Pandemic.

B. Previous interventions in the Use of ICTs for Teaching and Learning in Uganda

The UNESCO-China Funds-in-Trust Project focusing on “Enhancing Teacher Education for Bridging the Education Quality Gap in Africa” was established in 2014 in a complementarity role to contribute to the Capacity Development of teachers in key Teacher Training Institutions in Uganda. During this phase, three educational hubs of Shimoni Core PTC, Nakawa VTI and Kyambogo University – Open Distance Education and Learning Department (ODEL) were supported with both ICT hardware to support ICT Integration in education and pedagogical skills. They were supported on how to develop Open Education Resources (OERs) materials and how to share them interactively with their learners.

The 3 hubs were clustered into Primary Tutors Colleges represented by Shimoni Core PTC, National Teachers Colleges (for Secondary teacher training) represented by Kyambogo University and TVET Institutions for instructor and technicians training represented by Nakawa VTI. A server that would provide a central connectivity to all was installed at Shimoni Core PTC. A Learner management system based on moodle platform was developed and installed in the server for all to access through controlled services. Some tutors, lecturers and Instructors were trained on how to utilize the service of the server. Maintenance of the server was however envisaged to be a challenge in future.

Phase II of the project was envisaged to support the 3 hubs in moving forward the Phase I objectives to the other training Institutions. It was supposed to use the very personnel that were trained from the three institutions to create a multiplier effect to the other colleges and Technical/Vocational Institutions. Phase II was to cover 45 PTCs, 5 NTCs and 3 Instructor training Colleges. The developed content was intended to be accessed by all learners in the country in the long run. The assignment is expected to map the private and public companies or telecoms to supports ICT use in Education and for teaching and learning. However, sustaining these interventions has proved to be a problem given the limited funding that comes from the government sector to strengthen the use of ICTs for teaching and learning.

C. Project Goal and Intermediate Outcomes

In response to the Covid -19 pandemic and in line with the Ministry of Education response plan, UNESCO under CapEd, in conjunction with the Ministry has designed the project titled “continued learning through digital and radio platforms during covid -19 pandemic in Uganda”. The project aims to increase learning opportunities for crisis-affected populations with two main interventions through (i) supporting continuity of learning at the teacher training institutions through the existing ICT platforms and (ii) supporting student learning in primary and secondary schools through dedicated radio and TV platforms. This will be doen through the identification of critical
partners that such as private and public companies or telecoms that can help to supports ICT use in Education. However, to sustain these interventions, a lot of support and engagement is needed by key partners such as the private and public companies or telecoms to support the education sector in the use of ICTs. And this project seeks to undertake a mapping to identify key partners that support the process in ICT integration and use in the education sector.

D. Purpose and objectives of the Assignment

**Purpose**
The overall purpose is to strengthen the competencies of teachers and teacher educators in the use of the ICTs as pedagogical tools to support the continuity of learning at the teacher training institutions and school level amidst the covid19 pandemic in Uganda.

**Objectives**
The specific objective of the assignment is to undertake a mapping of the private and public companies or telecoms that can support ICT use in Education in order to identify strategies and opportunities that can be used to support the use of ICTs for teaching and learning in Uganda. The assignment will also entail documenting the existing strategies and opportunities that are being used by these private companies and develop an engagement strategy with the private and public companies or telecoms to support ICT use in Education sector based on the potential areas of engagement and gaps identified.

E. Project Management

The continued learning through digital and radio platforms during covid-19 pandemic in Uganda project is implemented by the UNESCO project office in Kampala in collaboration with UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa, UNESCO’s Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA); the Ministry of Education and Sports, and partner organizations such as UNICEF, ILO, UNHCR and Belgium Embassy.

F. Scope of Work

The assignment focuses on undertaking a mapping of the private and public companies or telecoms that can support ICT use in Education. The tasks will include:

- Thorough a stakeholder analysis, identifying the most influential, relevant and potential private and public companies or telecoms that have been or can be instrumental to support the use of ICTs for teaching and learning;
- Hold interview and document the existing strategies and opportunities being used by the private and public companies or telecoms to support the use of ICTs for teaching and learning in Ugandan Schools and colleges in Uganda;
- Determine linkages, levels of influence, and goals of actors in the private and public companies or telecoms with the education sector and potential interventions to support ICT use in education;
- Analyse and document the existing strategies and opportunities that can be used to support the use of ICTs for teaching and learning in Ugandan Schools in Uganda;
- Develop an engagement strategy with the private and public companies or telecoms to support ICT use in Education based on the potential areas of engagement and gaps identified.

G. Deliverables;

The key deliverables of this consultancy shall include the following:

a) An inception report clearly articulating the understanding of the assignment, the terms of reference and the deliverables therein. It should also detail the methodology to be used for the assessment

b) A comprehensive report that clearly articulates the different institutions - private and public companies or telecoms to supports ICT use in Education.

H. Duration of the Assignment

The consulting firm shall perform the tasks defined in this ToR within 30 working days from the date of signature of an engagement contract.
I. Reporting and management of the consultancy
This activity will be implemented under the authority of the Director UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa and in collaboration with the Regional office for Eastern Africa and the UNESCO Project Office in Kampala.

J. Key Qualifications:
The consulting team must have the following qualifications, experiences and skills
- Have bachelor's degree or higher in computer or information science.
- Have knowledge of and experience working with different operating systems, such as Windows, UNIX and Mac OS X, and being able to install hardware, such as modems and hard drives.
- Have knowledge of troubleshooting software and hardware problems, know how to diagnose technical problems and develop solutions for them
- Have knowledge of computer networking, computer hardware and software engineering
- Have Sound technical knowledge about IT, security of systems and latest developments in the field
- Excellent management, organization and time management skills
- Strong communication skills, both written and verbal
- Excellent observation and analytical skills
- Previous work experience as a consultant in a similar area with international organizations or donor agencies is an asset.

K. Application Process
Interested consulting firms should submit an application file comprising the following documents to the following emails, v.kisaakye@unesco.org
   a) Letter of expression of Interest
   b) A brief profile of the consulting firm
   c) Up to date Curriculum Vitae of the consulting team
   d) Detailed technical and financial proposal quoting the fee per day in USD.

Interested firms should submit their application by Friday July 3rd, 2020.