



Request for Proposal – Nepal EGRP II-RFQ-FY21-P006

Commodity/Service Required:	Consultant to Support the Revision to the Reading Benchmark
Type of Procurement:	Consultancy
Type of Contract:	LOE based
Term of Contract:	June 25 to November 10, 2021
Contract Funding:	72036720CA00001
This Procurement supports:	USAID’s Early Grade Reading Program II (EGRP II)
Submit Proposal to:	The Selection Committee RTI- USAID Early Grade Reading Program II House no. 46/64, Uttar Dhoka, Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Nepal
Date of Issue of RFP:	Thursday, June 10, 2021
Date Questions from Supplier Due:	Monday, June 14, 2021, 11:00 AM Nepal Standard Time at procurement@np-egrp.rti.org Note: Question and answer will be posted on RTI Website
Date Proposal Due:	11:00 AM NST, Monday June 21, 2021
Approximate Date Purchase Order Issued to Successful Bidder(s):	Friday, June 25, 2021

Method of Submittal:

Please submit quotes/proposals to: egrp-procurement@np-egrp.rti.org

Respond via e-mail with attached document in MS Word / pdf format. The subject of the email should read “**Nepal EGRPII-RFP-FY21-P006**”.

The Bidder/Seller agrees to hold the prices in its offer firm for **90 days** from the date specified for the receipt of offers, unless another time is specified in the addendum of the RFP/RFQ.

Solicitation Number:	Nepal EGRP II-RFP-FY21-P006
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Attachments to RFP:

1. Attachment “A” – Commodity Specifications

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2. Attachment “B” – Instructions to Bidders/Sellers
3. All PO Terms and Conditions are listed on our website at:
<https://www.rti.org/sites/default/files/rti-purchase-order-terms-and-conditions-v1.16.pdf>,
[http://www.rti.org/files/PO FAR Clauses.pdf](http://www.rti.org/files/PO_FAR_Clauses.pdf) or for commercial items:
[http://www.rti.org/files/PO FAR Clauses Commercial Items.pdf](http://www.rti.org/files/PO_FAR_Clauses_Commercial_Items.pdf) (hereinafter the “Terms”).
Supplier’s delivery of products, performance of services, or issuance of invoices in connection with this purchase order establishes Supplier’s agreement to the Terms. The Terms may only be modified in writing signed by both parties.

All bidders/sellers are responsible to carefully review each attachment and follow any instructions that may be relevant to this procurement.

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Attachment A

Commodity Specifications or Statement of Work

Statement of Work

Background

Early Grade Reading Program II (EGRP II) is a two-year, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded program of technical assistance to the Government of Nepal (GON) that is being implemented from June 1, 2020 to May 31, 2022. EGRP II's support to the GON will be provided in the context of the shift toward the recently developed integrated curriculum (IC), ongoing decentralization in Nepal's governance system, and most likely, prolonged disruptions to teaching and learning due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Building on the foundation of the first Early Grade Reading Program (EGRP) from 2015 to 2020, EGRP II aims to improve early grade literacy for students in grades 1–3 in Nepali public schools by supporting IC development and rollout (Objective 1), building local capacity for early grade reading (EGR) service delivery (Objective 2), improving teacher professional support (TPS) (Objective 3), and assisting with the COVID-19 response in the education sector (Objective 4).

EGRP II is implemented in 38 NEGRP districts, covering 396 Local Education Units. The program provides intensive support for the implementation of the NEGRP minimum package in 22 districts where MOEST is expanding EGR activities (referred to as Levels 1 and 2) and continued technical assistance for the 16 districts that were targeted under EGRP (called Level 3). EGRP II operates from a Kathmandu central office as well as four regional offices.

EGRP II is working with MoEST and CLAs at central for the effective implementation of the NEGRP in the program districts. In 2017, Nepal's EGRP program worked with CDC and other CLAs to develop Reading Benchmark. Reading benchmark is the minimum learning competency that a country defines by taking the structure of the language, and available reading data into consideration. The Reading Benchmark that was developed in 2017 was founded upon the available literature and the CB-EGRA 2016 pilot data. The 45 CWPM along with 80 percent comprehension was the benchmark value defined by the document. The benchmark value was, however, the same for all grade one-three students. We witness that the reading ability of students from grade one-three is different for the different grades (ERO 2017; ERO 2018; ERO 2019; NORC, 2018a; NORC 2018b; NORC; 2020)¹. Thus, revised reading benchmarks are required to make to compare reading data collected by any agency

¹ Education Review Office. (2017). *Classroom Based Early Grade Reading Assessment Report- 2017*. Author.
Education Review Office. (2017). *Classroom Based Early Grade Reading Assessment Report- 2018* Author.
Education Review Office. (2017). *Classroom Based Early Grade Reading Assessment Report- 2019*. Author.
NORC. (2018a). *Nepal EGRP's EGRA/ EMES Baseline Study Report 2016*. USAID Nepal.
NORC. (2018b). *Nepal EGRP's EGRA/ EMES Midline Study Report 2018*. USAID Nepal.
NORC. (2020). *Nepal EGRP's EGRA/ EMES Endline Study Report 2020*. USAID Nepal.

to compare the status with the national standard.

National EGRA conducted in 2014 and NARN in 2020 and EGRP baseline, midline, and endline data does not support to consider the reading benchmark developed in 2017 as the average reading ability of the students that can be considered as the minimum reading ability. The CB-EGRA data does not provide the information on the reading fluency directly. However, EGRP II is working to develop a model to extrapolate reading ability scores (fluency and comprehension).

In this context, MoEST has realized the need for revision of the reading benchmark which will be applicable for the Nepali language. It is intended that separate benchmarks will be developed for grades one, two, and three. It is also proposed that the benchmark will break down different categories of readers, such as non-readers, initial readers, emergent readers, and fluent readers.

MoEST has formed a task team to revise the reading benchmark. The members of the Task Team are the representative from MoEST, CEHRD, ERO, CDC, and EGRP II. To enhance the capacity of the task team, EGRP II aims to hire an expert who will work as a member of the task team and support development and finalization of the Reading Benchmark.

Scope of Work

EGRP II will hire an expert to support the Reading Benchmarking development and finalization process. The scope of work (SoW) for this activity for the consultant includes supporting the task team to review national and international literature related to the reading benchmarks, reviewing existing reading database including CB-EGRA 2016- 2020 data, NARN-2020 data, and other relevant data, and preparing and finalizing the revised reading benchmark.

Objectives of the Assignment

The main purpose of the assignment is to support the task team to revise and finalize the reading benchmark. More specifically, the following are the objectives of the assignment.

- a) To review the existing reading benchmark document developed and endorsed in 2017 by MoEST
- b) To review national and international literature related to reading benchmarks
- c) To provide technical inputs to categorize the readers such as non-readers, initial readers, emergent readers, and fluent readers
- d) To become a member of the task team and to support the team to develop the reading benchmarks for grades one, two, and three separately
- e) To document the process of the entire benchmark revision process.

Review of the national and international literature

The consultant will work as a member of the Benchmark Revision Task Team. The person will support the team to review the national and international literature related to reading. Based on the review, s\he will produce a comprehension literature review.

Review the available data

The consultant will work along with the Task Team to review the available reading data and reports. The data and reports shall be available at ERO. Based on the trend, the consultant should be able to provide construct feedback on the following:

Categorizing the readers

The consultant will work closely with the Task team to develop reader categorizations according to the reading fluency and/ or comprehension data. The categorization of the readers should be based upon international practices, national data evidence, and national need and practice.

Finalization of the Benchmark Document:

The consultant will work as a member of the benchmarking team. The benchmark document will be the output of this consultancy. The consultant will also provide technical support to the other team members while disseminating the report and finalizing it.

Process Documentation

Besides the technical Benchmark Document, the consultant should prepare an overall process document. The process document should clearly document the process that was followed to develop the revised benchmarks, such that the process will be replicable by future audiences who did not participate. To this end, it could include a description of the overall activities conducted during the benchmarking process, as well as the timeline and stakeholders involved. It should also include the consultant's reflections on the effectiveness of the process and recommendations for the future.

Dissemination of the Reports

The report prepared by the task team should be disseminated to the stakeholders along with MoEST and representatives of the CLAs. It may be required to present among other stakeholders from inside or outside the Kathmandu valley. The report also should go through the EGRP II technical team and their concurrence before making the final payment of the task.

Qualification of the consultant

The consultant should have good knowledge of the Nepali language and early grade reading skills and instructions. The person should have at least Master's Degree with at least five years of experience in language teaching at the university level or at least five years of experience in education research, especially in the area of reading. The candidate should also have broad understanding of the primary education system in Nepal, including aspects such as curriculum standards and educational assessment approaches. Preference will be given to candidates possessing a Ph.D. in language / linguistics with sufficient research experience in the education sector.

Level of Effort and Period of Performance

The period of performance for this consultancy will be approximately June 25 through November 10, 2021. During that period, the consultant will provide a total of 30 days of person day effort for the entire process. The consultant should attend all the task team meetings, dissemination events, and other related activities.

Place of Performance

The consultant will predominantly coordinate with the EGRP II team and the task team through virtual/online modalities. However, in-person meetings may also be required. Travel time to and from meetings in Kathmandu and outside Kathmandu will be considered billable time. The review of literature and report preparation will occur in the Kathmandu valley. However, the consultant may need to travel outside the Kathmandu valley to disseminate the report, and it is expected that this travel would cover not more than 8 days.

Deliverables, payments and logistics

This will be a milestone-based consultancy. Payments will be made based on EGRP II receipt and approval of the deliverables listed in the table below. The consultant will also be reimbursed for reasonable consultancy-related expenses for travel outside the Kathmandu valley, with prior written approval from the EGRP II hiring manager. EGRP II will provide travel cost (air ticket, local transportation) and DSA as per EGRP II norms to the consultant. For this, s\he will be responsible to submit all necessary documentation for reimbursement. EGRP II will provide required logistic support to facilitate the process.

SN	Deliverable description	Dates	Payment amount
1	Inception report based on the national and international literature review	Within 2 calendar weeks of contract signature	30% of the total cost
2	Process documentation report	Within 4 months of contract signature	30% of the total cost
3	Revised Benchmark document forwarded to MOEST for the approval	Within 4.5 months of contract signature	40% of the total cost

Time of frame

The tentative timeframe of the consultancy is presented in table 1 Gantt chart.

Activity	June	July				August				September				October				November
	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1
Consultancy Award																		
Team Meeting																		
Literature Review																		
Reading Data analysis																		
Draft benchmark document preparation																		
Dissemination of the benchmark document with EGRP II technical staff																		
Feedback incorporation and revision																		
Dissemination among CLAs and others																		
Process documentation																		
Finalization of the benchmark document																		

Submission Guideline

Please note that all application documents must be submitted in no more than 6 electronic separate files listed below:

- Cover Letter summarizing your experience in the subject matter and expressing interest in

the assignment (including expected daily rate).

- Curriculum Vitae (with contact details of three references for the last three years, including: name, address, telephone number, email address, and contract amount for each reference).
- Evidence of working experience (at least five years of experience in language teaching at the university level or at least five years of experience in education research, especially in the area of reading).
- A copy of academic certificates.
- A copy of citizenship and pan card.
- Signed copy of this RFP.

By signing this attachment, the bidder confirms he has a complete understanding of the specifications and fully intends to deliver items that comply with the above listed specifications.

Signature:

Title:

Date:

Attachment “B” Instructions to Bidders/Sellers

1. **Procurement Narrative Description:** The Buyer (RTI) intends to purchase commodities and/or services identified in Attachment A. The Buyer intends to purchase the quantities (for commodities) and/or services (based on deliverables identified in a Statement of Work). The term of the Ordering Agreement shall be from Award Date to the Delivery date of the Offeror unless extended by mutual agreement of the parties. The Buyer intends to award to a single “approved” supplier based on conformance to the listed specifications, the ability to service this contract, and selling price. We reserve the right to award to more than one bidder. If an Ordering Agreement is established as a result of this RFQ/RFP, supplier understands that quantities indicated in the specifications (Attachment A) are an estimate only and RTI does not guarantee the purchase quantity of any item listed.
2. **Procuring Activity:** This procurement will be made by **Research Triangle Institute (RTI International)**, located at

RTI- USAID Early Grade Reading Program II
House no. 46/64, Uttar Dhoka, Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Nepal

who has a purchase requirement in support of a project funded by

USAID

RTI shall award the initial quantities and/or services and any option quantities (if exercised by RTI) to Seller by a properly executed Purchase Order as set forth within the terms of this properly executed agreement.

3. **Proposal Requirements.** All Sellers will submit a quote/proposal which contains offers for all items and options included in this RFQ/RFP. All information presented in the Sellers quote/proposal will be considered during RTI’s evaluation. Failure to submit the information required in this RFQ/RFP may result in Seller’s offer being deemed non-responsive. Sellers are responsible for submitting offers, and any modifications, revisions, or withdrawals, so as to reach RTI’s office designated in the RFQ/RFP by the time and date specified in the RFQ/RFP. Any offer, modification, revision, or withdrawal of an offer received at the RTI office designated in the RFQ/RFP after the exact time specified for receipt of offers is “late” and may not be considered at the discretion of the RTI Procurement Officer. The Seller’s proposal shall include the following:
 - (a) The solicitation number: Nepal EGRP II-RFP-FY21-P006
 - (b) The date and time submitted:
 - (c) The name, address, and telephone number of the seller (bidder) and authorized signature of same:
 - (d) Validity period of Quote: 90 days

- (e) A technical description of the items being offered in sufficient detail to evaluate compliance with the requirements in the solicitation. This may include product literature, or other documents, if necessary.
 - (f) If RTI informs Seller that the Commodity is intended for export and the Commodity is not classified for export under Export Classification Control Number (ECCN) “EAR99” of the U.S. Department of Commerce Export Administration Regulations (EAR), then Seller must provide RTI the correct ECCN and the name of Seller’s representative responsible for Trade Compliance who can confirm the export classification.
 - (g) Lead Time Availability of the Commodity/Service.
 - (h) Terms of warranty describing what and how the warranties will be serviced.
 - (i) Special pricing instructions: Price and any discount terms or special requirements or terms (special note: pricing must include guaranteed firm fixed prices for items requested.)
 - (j) Payment address or instructions (if different from mailing address)
 - (k) Acknowledgment of solicitation amendments (if any)
 - (l) Past performance information, when included as an evaluation factor, to include recent and relevant contracts for the same or similar items and other references (including points of contact with telephone numbers, and other relevant information)
 - (m) **Special Note:** *The Seller, by his response to this RFQ/RFP and accompanying signatures, confirms that the terms and conditions associated with this RFQ/RFP document have been agreed to and all of its attachments have been carefully read and understood and all related questions answered.*
4. **Forms:** Sellers (potential bidders or suppliers) must record their pricing utilizing the format found on Attachment “A”. Sellers must sign the single hardcopy submitted and send to address listed on the cover page of this RFQ/RFP.
5. **Questions Concerning the Procurement.** All questions in regards to this RFQ/RFP to be directed to
- The Selection Committee
RTI-USAID EGRP II
- at this email address:
- procurement@np-egrp.rti.org
- The cut-off date for questions is:
- Monday, June 14, 2021, 11:00 AM Nepal Standard Time
6. **Notifications and Deliveries:** Time is of the essence for this procurement. Seller shall deliver the items or services no later than the dates set forth in the contract that will be agreed by

both parties as a result of this RFQ/RFP. The Seller shall immediately contact the Buyer's Procurement Officer if the specifications, availability, or the delivery schedule(s) changes. Exceptional delays will result in financial penalties being imposed of Seller.

7. **Documentation:** The following documents will be required for payment for each item:
 - (a) A detailed invoice listing Purchase Order Number, Bank information with wiring instructions (when applicable)
 - (b) Packing List
 - (c) All relevant product/service documentation (manuals, warranty doc, certificate of analysis, etc.)
8. **Payment Terms:** Refer to RTI purchase order terms and conditions found in <https://www.rti.org/sites/default/files/rti-purchase-order-terms-and-conditions-v1.16.pdf> , <http://www.rti.org/files/PO FAR Clauses.pdf>, or <http://www.rti.org/files/PO FAR Clauses Commercial Items.pdf>. Payment can be made via wire transfer or other acceptable form. Sellers may propose alternative payment terms and they will be considered in the evaluation process.
9. **Alternative Proposals:** Sellers are permitted to offer "alternatives" should they not be able to meet the listed requirements. Any alternative proposals shall still satisfy the minimum requirements set forth in Attachment A Specifications.
10. **Inspection Process:** Each item shall be inspected prior to final acceptance of the item. All significant discrepancies, shortages, and/or faults must be satisfactorily corrected and satisfactorily documented prior to delivery and release of payment.
11. **Evaluation and Award Process:** The RTI Procurement Officer will award an agreement contract resulting from this solicitation to the responsible Seller (bidder) whose offer conforms to the RFQ/RFP will be most advantageous to RTI, price and other factors considered. The award will be made to the Seller representing the **best value** to the project and to RTI. For the purpose of this RFQ/RFP, price, delivery, technical and past performance are of equal importance for the purposes of evaluating, and selecting the "best value" awardee. RTI intends to evaluate offers and award an Agreement without discussions with Sellers. Therefore, the Seller's initial offer should contain the Seller's best terms from a price and technical standpoint. However, RTI reserves the right to conduct discussions if later determined by the RTI Procurement Officer to be necessary.

The evaluation factors will be comprised of the following criteria:

- (a) **PRICE.** Reasonable price.
 - (b) **DELIVERY.** Seller provides the most advantageous delivery schedule.
 - (c) **TECHNICAL.** Items/Services shall satisfy or exceed the specifications described in RFQ/RFP Attachment A.
 - (d) **PAST PERFORMANCE** - Seller can demonstrate his/her capability and resources to provide the items/services requested in this solicitation in a timely and responsive manner.
12. **Award Notice.** A written notice of award or acceptance of an offer, mailed or otherwise furnished to the successful supplier within the time acceptance specified in the offer, shall result in a binding contract without further action by either party.

13. **Validity of Offer.** This RFP in no way obligates RTI to make an award, nor does it commit RTI to pay any costs incurred by the Seller in the preparation and submission of a proposal or amendments to a proposal. Your proposal shall be considered valid for 90 days after submission.
14. **Representations and Certifications.** Winning suppliers under a US Federal Contract are required to complete and sign as part of your offer RTI Representations and Certifications for values over \$10,000.
15. **Anti- Kick Back Act of 1986.** Anti-Kickback Act of 1986 as referenced in FAR 52.203-7 is hereby incorporated into this Request for Proposal as a condition of acceptance. If you have reasonable grounds to believe that a violation, as described in Paragraph (b) of FAR 52.203-7 may have occurred, you should report this suspected violation to the RTI's Ethics Hotline at 1-877-212-7220 or by sending an e-mail to ethics@rti.org. You may report a suspected violation anonymously.
16. **The John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2019 - section 889.** RTI cannot use any equipment or services from specific companies, or their subsidiaries and affiliates, including Huawei Technologies Company, ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, and Dahua Technology Company ("Covered Technology"). In response to this request for proposal, please do not provide a quote which includes any Covered Technology. Any quote which includes Covered Technology will be deemed non-responsive. Additionally, if the United States Government is the source of funds for this RFP, the resulting Supplier shall not provide any equipment, system, or service that uses Covered Technology as a substantial or essential component

Acceptance:

Seller agrees, as evidenced by signature below, that the seller's completed and signed solicitation, seller's proposal including all required submissions and the negotiated terms contained herein, constitute the entire agreement for the services described herein.

By: *(Seller Company Name)*

Signature: _____

Title:

Date: