

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

VACANCY NOTICE FOR A CONSULTANT CONTRACT: MAKING COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION INCLUSIVE FOR LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES

Summary

UNESCO's Section for Health and Education (HAE) is seeking an individual consultant, team of consultants or an organization to conduct a needs assessment on disability-inclusive comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), including a desk review and mapping of actors, as well as to organize a think tank meeting with experts focused on providing CSE for learners with disabilities.

Timeframe: November 2023 – March 2024

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

UNESCO has engaged in different activities related to disability inclusion, for example by publishing a technical brief on *Violence and bullying in educational settings: the experience of children and young people with disabilities*. It has also included dedicated chapters and graphics on learners with disabilities in various publications, including the most recent global status report *Ready to learn and thrive: School health and nutrition around the world*. UNESCO's Strategy on Education for Health and Well-being (2022) emphasizes the importance of making CSE inclusive of learners with disabilities and references two recent studies by UNESCO's regional offices in Asia Pacific and Eastern and Southern Africa.

These two regional offices have led research to identify the challenges teachers and learners face in the delivery of and access to CSE with specific reference to disability, including teachers' experiences and professional learning and development needs for providing CSE to learners with disabilities. They identified gaps and put forward recommendations for their respective regions on how to improve disability-inclusive CSE through policy, research and training. The regional studies highlighted that more awareness is needed at the global level on the scale of the issue, as well as to ensure that CSE implementation approaches include considerations to modify their design and delivery to make sexuality education both accessible and meaningful to learners with disabilities in a wide range of different contexts. There is also a need to ensure that disability inclusiveness is integrated across UNESCO's work in support of CSE.

Based on findings from the work done in the regions, UNESCO – in line with its Strategic Outcome 2: Good quality, gender transformative CSE including HIV, life skills, family and rights – is proposing a new area of work to develop and promote CSE that is accessible and inclusive for learners with disabilities. For further information on this theme and the context for the assignment with UNESCO, please refer to the Concept Note related to this piece of work.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF THIS AREA OF WORK

The overall aim is to contribute to ensuring that in the implementation of CSE globally, whether in or out of school, no young person with disabilities is left behind. The specific objectives are the following:

1. Better understand the needs of teachers and students in the context of the delivery of CSE in the education sector for learners with disabilities, particularly outside the Asia Pacific and East and Southern Africa regions, as well as the global landscape of actors, and the programmes and approaches used globally, with an emphasis on those that have been field-tested and evaluated.
2. Enhance dialogue between relevant stakeholders and UNESCO on the matter and facilitate the development and expansion of disability inclusive education in participating countries, targeting both disability inclusion actors and CSE actors to create synergies.
3. Build awareness on disability rights, accessibility and inclusion and in-house capacity of key UNESCO staff in Headquarters and relevant regional and field offices to equip staff with adequate tools and resources to mainstream disability inclusion.
4. In the long run, support Member States to develop and deliver disability-inclusive CSE that is contextually appropriate and in line with the UN's International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education.

THE ASSIGNMENT

To increase the understanding of more accessible and inclusive CSE for learners with disabilities, UNESCO is seeking consultancy services to conduct a needs assessment, including a desk review and mapping of actors, as well as to organize a think tank meeting with experts focused on high quality, evidence-informed CSE for learners with disabilities.

The desk review and think tank meeting will be **Phase 1** of a multi-phased area of work that, in its entirety, will aim to achieve the objectives outlined in the section above.

SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant/s will be responsible for both the needs assessment and the think tank meeting as outlined below.

Needs assessment: A desk review will be conducted to explore both published and unpublished data and information on CSE for learners with disabilities, and to identify organizations and programmes with experience in delivering CSE to learners with disabilities (and associated resource materials) that can inform this suite of work. This will enable the HAE Section to engage and build relations with key partners and set the ground for future work, both to mainstream disability inclusion and to carry out specific work focused on learners with disabilities.

- Outputs:
 - A background document (approx. 10-15 pages) highlighting the main findings of the desk review

- An Excel sheet with the main information on actors and organizations that have experience in delivering CSE to learners with disabilities, as well as details of their relevant programmes or resources
- Timeframe for the needs assessment: November 2023 - January 2024

Think tank meeting: An online meeting composed of experts (including those with the expertise of lived experience) focused on providing CSE for learners with disabilities will be held to garner evidence and best practices, including approach, methodology, effectiveness, efficiency, inclusiveness, and impact, building on the results of the needs assessment. This activity will also be an opportunity to engage participants with the emerging findings from the desk review, and feedback from participants will be built into the advocacy and knowledge products. Stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds will be invited, aiming to bring together the spheres of disability inclusion in its diversity, and CSE practice, for mutual learning and enrichment.

- Outputs:
 - A concept note for the meeting
 - A detailed agenda for the meeting
 - Co-facilitation of the meeting
 - A meeting report (approx. 10-15 pages) highlighting the main discussion points and recommendations from the think tank meeting
- Timeframe for the think tank meeting: February-March 2024

DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

The consultancy will be carried out over a period of five months, to be completed by the end of March 2024.

| Activities | Deliverables | Timeframe |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Needs assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report on desk review findings ● Excel-Sheet with the mapping of actors and activities ● PowerPoint presentation on preliminary findings | November 2023 - January 2024 |
| Think tank meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concept note ● Agenda ● Meeting report | February-March 2024 |

PLACE OF WORK, REPORTING, MANAGEMENT

The consultancy is home-based and will be carried out in the usual place of residence/work. The consultant/s will report directly to and be supervised by the Programme Specialist, with the support of the Associate Programme Specialist, under the authority of the Chief, Section of Health and Education, Division of Peace and Sustainable Development, Education Sector, UNESCO HQ, Paris.

UNESCO will provide the successful consultant/s with:

- Introductions to key contacts as appropriate

- Initial documentation collected for the desk review
- Logistical/technical support for the online meeting, including accessibility considerations
- Timely guidance and feedback in relation to the activities as needed.

QUALIFICATIONS

UNESCO is seeking an individual consultant, team of consultants, or an organisation, to undertake this work. The main consultant/s must individually or collectively demonstrate the following qualifications:

- Advanced academic degree (master's degree or higher) in a related field (preferably education, international development, public health promotion/health education, social work, sociology, diversity and inclusion, disability)
- A minimum of 8 years' proven relevant experience in the subject matter, namely, the rights of persons with disabilities AND either Comprehensive Sexuality Education or Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR); proven knowledge of the rights, health and wellbeing of young persons with disabilities in different regions of the world
- At least 8 years of experience in research and writing on topics related to disability inclusion, CSE, Life Skills, SRHR
- Excellent analytical skills and ability to synthesize complex documents
- Excellent writing skills in English
- Excellent presentation and facilitation skills
- Demonstrated ability to organize and manage large stakeholder meetings
- Capacity to work independently while actively sharing information and engaging in dialogue with other partners
- Demonstrated ability to synthesize feedback from a range of experts and reviewers is also an asset.
- Ability to read and collect information in at least one other UN official language (Spanish, French, Arabic, Chinese, Russian) is a strong asset.
- Experience of working with UN organisations will be an asset.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The consultancy is open to suitably qualified consultant/s. Expressions of interest should take the form of a proposal that presents:

1. A statement describing how your qualifications and experience make you suitable for the assignment and outlining your proposed approach to the work for this assignment.
2. An up-to-date curriculum vitae. If applying as a team, please share an up-to-date curriculum vitae for each team member, well as a description of their proposed roles.
3. Examples of two recent writing samples of research work done on education for disability inclusion, the rights of persons with disabilities, children and early adolescents, social welfare, CSE, SRHR, or related themes, covering more than one country.
4. A budget clearly showing the lump sum per deliverable and total cost for completing the assignment, which should be quoted in US dollars.

Expressions of interest, including the four components listed above, should be sent in PDF form to Séverine Pillado se.pillado@unesco.org by **29 October 2023 (23:59 CET)**. Questions about the work can also be directed to this same address.