Individual Author Contract - Consultant

Request for a written proposal

Reference: Senior Researcher/Researcher

Request to submit a written proposal for a work assignment with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL).

Title: Sustainable Learning Cities: Inclusion, Equity and Lifelong Learning

Background information: UIL is inviting individuals to submit written proposals for the work assignment described in attachment I. When preparing a proposal for this assignment, please take into consideration the attached Terms of Reference (see attachment I).

The written proposal should include a Technical Proposal consisting of:

- an up-to-date curriculum vitae;
- a technical approach and methodology for the assignment, including a work plan in line with the Terms of Reference.

The proposal should furthermore state that

- the work assignment will be developed and completed within two months;
- the total amount payable upon completion of the assignment will be 4,000 US dollars.

Please note that the work assignment should be developed and completed before 27 July 2019. Your technical proposal and supporting documents must be in English, as must the final assignment.

UNESCO places great emphasis on ensuring that the objectives of the work assignment, as described in the Terms of Reference, are met. Accordingly, in evaluating the proposals for the assignment, attention will focus first and foremost on the technical elements included therein. From those proposals deemed suitable in relation to the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference, UNESCO shall select the proposal that offers the Organization the best value.

Your proposal should be submitted by e-mail no later than close of business (18:00) on **5 June 2019**. E-mail proposals should not exceed 5MB in size.

The e-mail should be addressed to: learningcities@unesco.org.

It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that his/her proposal is received by the deadline.

Thank you for your interest in this UNESCO assignment; we look forward to receiving your proposal.

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

Attachment I

Terms of Reference

Background

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), located in Hamburg, Germany, is one of UNESCO's key education-related institutes and is the only organizational unit in the UN family that holds a global mandate for lifelong learning. Taking a holistic and integrated, intersectoral and cross-sectoral approach to lifelong learning as the guiding paradigm for 21st century education, UIL promotes and supports lifelong learning with a focus on adult learning, continuing education, literacy and non-formal basic education. Its activities place particular emphasis on furthering educational equity for disadvantaged groups and in the countries most afflicted by poverty and conflict.

UIL is currently organizing the fourth International Conference on Learning Cities (ICLC), which will be dedicated to the theme of 'Inclusion – A Principle for Lifelong Learning and Sustainable Cities' and take place in Medellín, Colombia from 1-3 October 2019.

The objective of this conference is to identify and discuss effective lifelong learning policies and practices that support the development of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities.

More specifically, the objectives of the conference are to:

1) develop a common understanding of inclusion as part of lifelong learning and sustainable development;
2) identify public policies and planning approaches (e.g. governance, finance, intersectoral and multi-stakeholder approaches) that strengthen inclusion at the city level as a priority for lifelong learning and with a particular focus on vulnerable groups;
3) share experiences on the implementation of local actions that support inclusion through lifelong learning and have an impact on vulnerable groups; and
4) document monitoring mechanisms to assess progress towards the implementation of local inclusion strategies.

In preparation for the fourth ICLC, UIL is commissioning background documents on specific topics and questions related to inclusion and lifelong learning. These papers will contribute to an enhanced understanding of the ways in which lifelong learning policies and practices contribute towards the development of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities.

Duties and Requirements

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning is seeking to recruit a senior researcher (author) specializing in inclusion and lifelong learning, with a focus on urban policies.

The researcher should have a) an advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in education, international development, sociology, public policy or a related discipline; b) at least seven

years of professional experience as a researcher and/or analyst specializing in issues of inclusion and lifelong learning, including expertise in urban planning; c) 4 years of professional experience acquired at an international level; d) a proven publications record, particularly in peer-reviewed journals; d) excellent spoken and written English.

The senior researcher will develop a background paper focusing on inclusion and lifelong learning in cities, emphasising the ways in which formal, non-formal and informal learning can promote the inclusion of vulnerable groups at the local level.

Objectives:

In order to enhance understanding of how local lifelong learning policies and practices meet the needs and expectations of vulnerable groups living in cities, the senior researcher should consider the requirements detailed below when formulating his/her proposal and subsequent assignment.

Issues and examples referred to in the document should seek to maintain an overall balance according to region (sub-Saharan Africa, Northern Africa and Western Asia, Central and Southern Asia, East and South-eastern Asia, Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Northern America) and country income level (low, lower-middle, upper-middle and high).

Concepts

Identify **current difficulties** regarding **inclusion and equity in cities**. Define and describe the concepts of **inclusion and equity** in the context of **lifelong learning** and, across a range of contexts, identify which populations are regarded as **vulnerable groups** at the local level.

Policies and practices

Present evidence on **lifelong learning policies and practices** at the **city level** (including the learning city network) that are successfully addressing the needs of vulnerable groups.

- Discuss **policies and practices** targeted towards the **inclusion** of various categories of **excluded populations**.
- Identify **intersectoral and multi-stakeholder approaches** towards lifelong learning policies and practices for inclusion.

Consider the following guiding questions:

➢ What legal frameworks at the national level support inclusion as part of lifelong learning at the local level?
➢ How are cities collaborating with national authorities to develop inclusive policies that have an impact on the delivery of basic services (e.g. education) at the local level? Are there multilevel governance frameworks in place that strengthen this collaboration?
➢ How are employers from the public and private sectors and civil society collaborating at the city level to further enhance lifelong learning opportunities for vulnerable groups?

> ➢ What institutions and sectors are or should be participating in the planning and implementation of inclusive lifelong learning at the local level? What mechanisms need to be in place to ensure the participation of vulnerable groups in this process?
> ➢ How are cities creating inclusive learning environments (formal, non-formal and informal) that support quality lifelong learning opportunities for vulnerable groups? What kind of knowledge and skills do they support?
> ➢ How are flexible learning pathways between formal, non-formal and informal learning being created in ways that respond to, value and recognize the knowledge and skills of vulnerable groups in cities?

Challenges

Identify the **challenges** faced by cities when **developing and implementing lifelong learning policies and practices for the inclusion** of the **aforementioned vulnerable groups**. Present relevant **recommendations** on how to overcome any identified limitations.

Consider the following guiding questions:

> ➢ Are the challenges particularly pronounced for one or several of the vulnerable groups discussed in this paper? If so, which groups and why?
> ➢ To what extent are multiple sectors and stakeholders engaged in the development and implementation of lifelong learning policies and practices for vulnerable groups (particularly the four listed)? Where collaboration is currently limited, how might it be improved?
> ➢ Are sufficient and sustainable financing arrangements in place at the local level for initiatives geared towards inclusion? How might stakeholders maximize resources?
> ➢ What information, knowledge and evidence are needed to improve the inclusion of vulnerable populations in lifelong learning policies and practices?
> ➢ What mechanisms and forms of capacity development are needed at the local level to monitor inclusion as part of lifelong learning?
> ➢ Does the availability of data on vulnerable groups present challenges for the design of inclusive lifelong learning policies and practices?

In addition to the above, the senior researcher should reflect on the following rationale for the background paper.

Rationale: Rapid urbanization and vulnerable groups – challenges to and solutions for inclusive, safe and resilient learning cities through lifelong learning

Lifelong learning, inclusion and the 2030 Agenda

Lifelong learning is rooted in the integration of learning and living. It covers people of all ages, in all life-wide contexts and through a variety of formal, non-formal and informal learning modalities that together meet a wide range of learning needs and demands. Lifelong learning is a key principle of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – 'ensure

inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'.[1] This goal, with its ten targets, calls upon governments and other stakeholders to enable people of all ages and from all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds to participate fully in and benefit from quality lifelong learning opportunities.

In the Incheon Declaration and SDG4 of the Education 2030 Framework for Action, inclusion and equity in and through education are presented as the cornerstones of a transformative education agenda. In particular, Target 4.5 aims to eliminate gender disparities and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations. Target 4.a, meanwhile, focuses on providing safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

What is 'inclusive education'?

Inclusion as an integral part of lifelong learning reaffirms each individual's right to education as upheld in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Further, in the Conclusions and Recommendations of the 48th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) chaired by UNESCO-IBE in 2008 and entitled 'Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future', 155 Member States and other stakeholders reaffirmed the principle of inclusive education as fundamental to the achievement of human, social and economic development. Importantly, ICE participants endorsed 'inclusive education as an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination'.[2]

In line with the above, inclusion is understood as a process concerned with a) learning how to live with and learn from difference; b) identifying and removing barriers through the collection, collation and evaluation of information from a wide variety of sources in order to plan improvements in policy and practice; and c) placing a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion or underachievement.[3]

As a component of lifelong learning, inclusive education encourages an 'active role and the participation of the learners themselves, their families and their communities'.[4] By adopting a holistic approach, inclusive education aims to 'strengthen the links between schools and society to enable families and the communities to participate in and contribute to the educational process'.[5] In order to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children, youth and adults, inclusive education proposes 'to develop coordinated efforts to tackle the factors that have put these groups in situations of

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[1] UNESCO. 2016. *Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all*. Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245656

[2] UNESCO-IBE. 2008. *Final Report*. 48th International Conference on Education – 'Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future'.

[3] UNESCO-IBE. 2016. *Training Tools for Curriculum Development – Reaching Out to All Learners: A Resource Pack for Supporting Inclusive Education*.

[4] UNESCO-IBE. *Final Report*. 48th International Conference of Education – 'Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future'.

[5] Ibid.

vulnerability and to enhance the factors that support them, across all aspects of their lives, and across their life spans, from conception through to adulthood'.[6]

Further, in line with the ICE recommendations, inclusive education is also about urgently addressing social inequity and poverty levels, as these are major obstacles to the implementation of inclusive education policies and strategies.[7] Such recommendations endorse the principles of equity and social justice as inherent to inclusion. Social inclusion can be defined as 'the process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities – that everyone, regardless of their background, can achieve their full potential in life. Such efforts include policies and actions that promote equal access to (public) services as well as activities to enable citizen's participation in the decision-making processes that affect their lives'.[8]

Importantly, equity 'considers the social justice ramifications of education in relation to the fairness, justness and impartiality of its distribution at all levels or educational sub-sectors'.[9] This approach takes into consideration the fact that a needs-based distribution of resources is fair or justified. Currently, however, the equitable allocation and distribution of resources and the creation of needs-based educational strategies are hindered by a lack of data pertaining to vulnerable groups. 'Today, many of the most marginalised groups remain invisible in education data at the global and national levels. This includes children and adults with disabilities, those displaced by conflict, child soldiers and labourers, as well as nomadic populations'.[10]

Inclusive education at the city level

Today, half of humanity – 3.5 billion people – lives in cities and 5 billion people are projected to live in cities by 2030. Many of these cities are increasingly attracting people of all ages and from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds in search of better lives, greater safety, basic services and decent work. Cities around the world are facing acute challenges in managing rapid urbanization – from ensuring adequate housing and infrastructure to supporting the well-being of growing vulnerable populations that include migrant populations, the poor and at-risk youth. The environmental impact of urban sprawl also represents a considerable challenge for cities and rural areas alike.

Access to high-calibre, resilient infrastructures and the provision of basic services for all urban and rural dwellers are key components of development objectives, as are local economic opportunities for the creation of decent jobs and social cohesion. Yet, in order to achieve this, learning opportunities in cities must be of high quality, be inclusive of the diverse backgrounds of all learners and be offered on a continuous basis throughout life.

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[6] Ainscow, M. 2016. 'Diversity and Equity: A Global Education Challenge'. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, November 2016, Volume 51, Issue 2, pp. 143–155.

[7] Ibid.

[8] The Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), in collaboration with UNESCO and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), held an Expert Group Meeting on 'Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration' at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, from 10-13 September 2007.

[9] UIS. 2018. *Handbook on Measuring Equity in Education*. Montreal, Quebec (citing Holsinger, 2008, p. 4).

[10] UIS. *International Observatory on Equity and Inclusion in Education*. Available at: http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/equity-education.

For instance, the *Learning Cities and the SDGs: Guide to Action* that resulted from the Cork Call to Action for Learning Cities underscores how 'responding to the learning needs of all groups in society fosters equity and inclusion'[11] and thus supports both SDG4 ('Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all') and SDG 11 ('Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable'). It is of particular importance that attention be paid to marginalized and/or vulnerable groups, including 'women and girls; people with disabilities and reduced mobility; migrants and refugees; and ethnic minorities'.[12] The Guide to Action, shaped by fresh experiences and good practices in cities, provided guiding questions to assess cities' progress.

Learning cities thus can become safe, resilient and sustainable when guided by the principle of inclusion. Cities can be key hubs of action in which local governments empower diverse communities and social actors to engage in the formulation of policies and strategies that lead to inclusive lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Main groups to consider for the background paper

(1) Migrants

Globally, the forcibly displaced population increased in 2017 by 2.9 million. By the end of the year, 68.5 million individuals worldwide had been forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict or generalized violence. Of these, 25.4 million were refugees, 40 million were internally displaced people and 3.1 million were asylum-seekers. In 2017, global trends relating to migrant populations identified 258 million international migrants, defined as people residing in a country other than their country of birth. This represented 3.4 per cent of the world's total population.[13]

People are increasingly moving to cities in search of better lives, greater safety, basic services and decent work. 'While migration is managed primarily by national governments, local authorities are assuming the daily reality of social and economic accommodation of newcomers and their interaction with the host community.'[14]

(2) Youth at risk (NEETs)

With youth defined as all persons between the ages of 15 and 24, the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) varies widely according to both location and gender. Globally, young women are over three times more likely to be NEETs than young men.[15] Male NEET rates are lowest in developing countries at 8 per cent, followed by emerging countries at 9.6 per cent, and developed countries at 11.3 per cent. It is important to note that NEET rates are lower in developing countries where, in the absence of social protection mechanisms, people cannot afford not

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[11] UIL. 2017. *Learning Cities and the SDGs: A Guide to Action*. Adopted at the third International Conference on Learning Cities, held in Cork, Ireland, in September 2017.
[12] Ibid.
[13] UNHCR. 2017. *Global Trends – Forced Displacement in 2017*. Available at:
https://www.unhcr.org/5b27be547.pdf%20.
[14] United Cities and Local Governments.
[15] ILO. 2017. *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017: Paths to a Better Working Future*. Geneva, Switzerland.

to work, even if such work is vulnerable and does not provide adequate earnings.[16] The regions with the lowest NEET rates are Eastern Asia (3.7 per cent), followed by Southern Asia (5.8 per cent). Rates are highest in Northern Africa (16.7 per cent), followed by Central and Western Asia. Worldwide, the female NEET rate is 34.4 per cent, compared to 9.8 per cent for males.

Youth unemployment has been linked to economic, political and social exclusion resulting in further social instability and inequalities. 'Although evidence shows that governments and cities are making efforts to tackle youth poverty and their lack of engagement in governance, resources to undertake such interventions are very limited.'[17] Unequal opportunities and outcomes relating to education, health, food security, employment, housing, health services and economic resources in cities are exacerbated not only due to differences not only in income and wealth, but also in gender, age, ethnicity and minority status, among others.[18] In particular, women and youth are often the most vulnerable in urban contexts, along with other groups such as persons with disabilities, the poor, refugees and immigrants.[19]

(3) Digitally excluded populations

The UN estimates that, in 2017, the global population of people aged 60 or older numbered 962 million – more than double the total recorded in 1980.[20] This age group is the most affected by the technological gap. 79 per cent of the 16-55-year-old internet users accounted for by Spain's Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación (Association for Communication Media Research) have internet access, but access decreases to 29 per cent among 56-70-year-olds and just five per cent among 71-80-year-olds.[21] In addition, a lack of literacy skills is often linked to poverty, which may restrict access to and the efficient use of ICTs. The older generation and people with low levels of literacy constitute two groups, among others, that struggle to catch up with ICT skills and are at risk of being left behind.

While cities are enthusiastic about the positive changes that ICT usage can bring, the digital divide remains a major challenge that they must tackle. Local governments and/or local groups are trying to: provide (at least) adequate or (ideally) high-performance infrastructure (such as high-speed internet in both urban and rural areas); ensure that devices (such as computers, tablets and smartphones) are available and affordable; and equip individuals with the skills required to use them.

(4) People living in slums and deprived neighbourhoods

Overall, cities are places that are increasingly attracting people in search of better lives, greater safety, basic services and decent work. Inadequate urban policy and planning can exacerbate social inequity

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[16] Ibid.

[17] UN-Habitat. 2017. *Cross-Cutting Report 2017. UN Habitat for A Better Future*.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 2017. *World Population Ageing 2017 - Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/397)*. Available at:
http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/WPA2017_Highlights.pdf

[21] Diaz-Lopez , Mª del Pilar, Remedios Lopez-Liria, José M. Aguilar-Parra & David Padilla-Gongora. 2016. *Keys to active ageing: new communication technologies and lifelong learning*. SpringerPlus.

and increase poverty levels among urban populations. It is estimated that at least 800 million people live in slums. However, the total may be higher still due to the national definitions of terms and/or assessment methods used. Many people living in disadvantaged areas have migrated from rural to urban zones and lack access to basic services, including public education.[22] It is, however, difficult to measure the extent to which those living in disadvantaged areas benefit from educational services, including those provided by the state. Disadvantaged areas tend to offer their residents limited leaning opportunities. This in turn risks reinforcing people's alienation from mainstream education, and hampers their participation and inclusion in social institutions and economic and community life more generally.

Access to high-calibre, resilient infrastructures and the provision of basic services for all urban dwellers are key components of development objectives, as are efforts to foster local economies. Furthermore, integrating the concept of lifelong learning into policies and practices has the potential to alleviate living conditions in slums and deprived neighbourhoods in the long term. An intersectoral perspective of this kind necessitates co-ordination across a number of areas, which encourages stakeholders to better appreciate how urban planning relates to education, health, environmental protection, etc.[23] All of these areas are fundamental to any improvement in the experiences and opportunities of people living in slums.

In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, education and lifelong learning for all can help to overcome the challenges encountered by this target group, as both a goal and a means of development.

3. Output

A. The work assignment shall consist of a background paper of approximately 10,000 words (excluding appendices, annexes and bibliographies) written in the English language at a very good level. It shall also include an abstract adapted to a non-technical audience. It shall be structured as follows:

- abstract;
- introduction;
- a conceptual framework on the principles of inclusion and equity in cities, focusing on how these help guide lifelong policies and practices that meet the needs of vulnerable groups, paying particular attention –to migrants; youth at risk (NEETs); digitally excluded populations, and people living in slums and deprived neighbourhoods. Emphasis should be placed on the ways in which inclusive, equitable and quality lifelong learning contributes to the development of safe and resilient learning cities;
- a section examining urban policy and planning for the inclusion of vulnerable groups in lifelong learning: approaches and effective policies; key elements; challenges and recommendations;
- a section examining the local implementation of lifelong learning opportunities in cities, with a focus on vulnerable groups: approaches, key elements and good practices; challenges and recommendations;

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[22] Global Education Monitoring Report. 2018. *Migration, Displacement and Education: Building Bridges, Not Walls*.

[23] UIL. 2015. *Unlocking the Potential of Urban Communities: Case Studies of Twelve Learning Cities*.

- a section examining the data collection and monitoring mechanisms used by local governments to identify vulnerable groups and their educational needs; challenges and recommendations. This section should also address the process and consequences of identifying vulnerable groups, and the implications that collected data has for urban policies;
- conclusion: key issues/trends and recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners;
- bibliography (in Endnote, where possible).

B. A list of recommended case studies/examples of good practice for further research.

Final Remarks

Background data collected for the preparation of the output detailed above shall also be delivered to UIL on completion of the contract.

The paper shall follow the style guidelines laid down in the UNESCO Style Manual:

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001418/141812e.pdf

The background paper shall not be circulated or published in any form without prior approval from UIL.