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 Cities: Inclusion, Equity and Lifelong Learning – Youth at Risk (NEETs)[1]

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).

Your 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;
- he total amount payable upon completion of the assignment will be 3,000 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.

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[1] NEET stands for 'not in employment, education or training'.

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, and with expertise in urban polices and youth.

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 policies and youth, four years of which have been acquired at an international level; c) a proven publications record, particularly in peer-reviewed journals; d) excellent spoken and written English.

The senior researcher/researcher will develop a background paper focusing on inclusion and lifelong learning, paying particular attention to the needs and expectations of **youth at risk (NEETs)** living in cities.

Objectives:

In order to enhance understanding of the ways in which local lifelong learning policies and practices meet the needs and expectations of migrants 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

Develop a **conceptual framework** on **inclusive and equitable lifelong learning** in **cities**, with a focus on the needs of **youth at risk (NEETs)**.

Policies and practices

Present evidence on **lifelong learning policies and practices** at the **city level** that are successfully addressing the needs of **youth at risk (NEETs)**. Identify **intersectoral and multi-stakeholder approaches** that promote inclusion in these policies and practices.

Consider the following guiding questions.

- ➢ How are cities collaborating with national authorities to develop inclusive policies that support **youth at risk (NEETs)**? Are there multilevel governance frameworks in place that contribute towards strengthening 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 young people?
- ➢ 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 young people in this process?
- ➢ How are cities creating inclusive learning environments (formal and, particularly, non-formal and informal) that support quality lifelong learning opportunities for **youth at risk (NEETs)**? 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 **youth at risk (NEETs)** in cities?

Challenges

Identify the **challenges** faced by cities when **developing and implementing lifelong learning policies and practices for the inclusion** of **youth at risk (NEETs)**. Present relevant **recommendations** on how to overcome any identified limitations.

Consider the following guiding questions:

➢ To what extent are multiple sectors and stakeholders engaged in the development and implementation of lifelong learning policies and practices for youth at risk (NEETs)? 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 the inclusion of youth at risk (NEETs)? How might stakeholders maximize resources?
➢ What information, knowledge and evidence are needed to improve the inclusion of youth at risk (NEETs) in lifelong learning policies and practices?
➢ What mechanisms and forms of capacity development are needed at the local level to monitor youth inclusion as part of lifelong learning?
➢ Does the availability of data on youth at risk (NEETs) 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.

Rapid urbanization and youth at risk (NEETs) – 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'.[2] 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

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[2] 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

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'.[3]

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. [4]

As a component of lifelong learning, inclusive education encourages an 'active role and the participation of the learners themselves, their families and their communities'. [5] 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 '.[6] 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 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'.[7]

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.[8] 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

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[3] UNESCO-IBE. 2008. *Final Report*. 48th International Conference on Education – 'Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future'.
[4] UNESCO-IBE. 2016. *Training Tools for Curriculum Development – Reaching Out to All Learners: A Resource Pack for Supporting Inclusive Education*.
[5] UNESCO-IBE. *Final Report*. 48th International Conference of Education – 'Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future'.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Mel Ainscow. 2016. 'Diversity and Equity: A Global Education Challenge'. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, November 2016, Volume 51, Issue 2, pp 143–155.
[8] Ibid.

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'.[9]

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'.[10] 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'.[11]

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.

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'[12] 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'.[13] The Guide to Action, shaped by fresh experiences and good practices in cities, provided guiding questions to assess cities' progress.

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[9] 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.

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

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

[12] 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.

[13] Ibid.

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.

Youth at Risk (NEETs)

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. Half of the world's population – 3.5 billion people – now lives in cities; a total that is predicted to rise to 5 billion by 2030.[14]

At present, there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, accounting for 16 per cent of the global population.[15] By 2030, the number of young people will increase to 1.3 billion.[16] The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) states that 85 per cent of the world's young people live in developing countries, and that by 2030, as many as 60 per cent of all urban dwellers will be under the age of 18.[17] Currently, youth makes up 25 per cent of the global working-age population, but accounts for 43.7 per cent of the unemployed. This results in almost every other jobless person in the world being aged between 15 and 24.[18]

At the same time, the number of young people who are classified as NEETs varies widely according to both location and sex. Globally, young women are over three times more likely to be NEETs than young men.[19] 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 to work, even if such work is vulnerable and does not provide adequate earnings.[20] 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. The disparity is greatest in emerging countries, where four out of five young NEETs are female. The high NEET rates in emerging and developing countries are driven by the large numbers of young men and, above all, young women, who are inactive and thus do not participate either in the labour force or in education.

[14] http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/.

[15] United Nations. 2017. *World Population Prospects*. Available at https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/.

[16] United Nations. 2017. *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017*. Available at: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2017.

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

[18] Ibid.

[19] ILO. 2017. *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017: Paths to a Better Working Future*. Geneva, Switzerland.

[20] Ibid.

This contrasts with developed countries, where around half of NEETs are unemployed, but available and looking for employment.[21]

Youth disengagement from educational and training opportunities has also been linked to the lack of quality and relevance of such services vis-à-vis the needs and expectations of young people, as well as those of the labour market. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, graduation rates and learning levels remain low compared to OECD countries despite high enrolment rates in primary and secondary education.[22] A mismatch between the school curriculum and the skills demanded by the labour market has been identified as an underlying factor, as has as a lack of teacher preparedness, physical resources and student motivation.[23] Further, while the right to education stipulates that secondary education should be part of the compulsory school cycle and guaranteed by the state, this right has yet to be universally applied. 'The main challenge is to shift the perception of secondary education as a privilege, hinging on clear mechanisms of selection and discrimination, towards another vision based on inclusive education conceived as a right'.[24]

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.'[25] 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.[26] 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. [27]

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.

Output

A. The work assignment shall consist of a background paper of approximately 6,000 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:

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Inter-American Development Bank, ed. by Matías Busso, Julián Cristia, Diana Hincapié, Julián Messina, and Laura Ripani. 2017. *Learning Better: Public Policy for Skills Development*.

[23] Ibid.

[24] UNESCO. 2017. *Youth and Changing Realities. Rethinking Secondary Education in Latin America*. Paris: UNESCO, p. 6.

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

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

- abstract;
- introduction;
- a conceptual framework on inclusion and lifelong learning in cities, focusing on how these cities meet the needs and expectations of youth at risk (NEETs) in ways that contribute to the development of safe, resilient and sustainable cities;
- a section examining urban policy and planning for the inclusion of youth 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 youth: approaches, key elements and good practices; challenges and recommendations;
- a section examining the data collection and monitoring mechanisms used by local governments to identify the educational and training needs of youth; challenges and recommendations;
- conclusion: key issues 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.