



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Hiring a consultant

Research and analysis regarding mobile phone usage for educational projects in rural contexts with significant connectivity and infrastructure limitations

1. Introduction

Uruguay's Ceibal Foundation is in charge of the Applied Research Project: *Inclusive Rural Digital Education*, whose countries of impact are Honduras and Nicaragua. The project, which is scheduled to end on November 30, 2023, was selected in the context of the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) call and is funded by IDRC Canada and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

Project description

The education crisis in Latin America was compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic: face-to-face restrictions meant education systems were unable to guarantee pedagogical continuity for the most vulnerable sectors. In this context, this applied research project is linked to the design of equitable and inclusive blended and distance learning strategies, with the integration of television and digital media and cultural adaptations for rural education communities in Nicaragua and Honduras. The proposal is supported by the Mexican Secretariat of Public Education as a strategic partner and the UNESCO Office in San José as a collaborating institution.

The purpose of the project is to enhance in a sustainable way the ability of the education systems of Honduras and Nicaragua to improve equity and inclusion in education in rural communities through the effective use of digital technologies for distance and blended learning. It is expected to produce innovation inputs to strengthen teaching and learning with the aid of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT): public policy guidelines, pedagogical guidelines, technical standards for the design of educational content, training resources and scaling guidelines.

The project will try to determine what experiences of effective use of digital technologies can be scaled to both countries and what culturally adaptive approaches they require. Learning strategies will be designed by integrating regional educational television, mobile telephony and digital systems innovations in order to promote equitable access to pedagogical practices and resources through participatory production methodologies.

The recipients will be officials of education portfolios and educational television stations, as well as technical teams, teachers, students and their families.



Ceibal Foundation and collaborating teams in Honduras and Nicaragua will undertake research activities in the field and will coordinate with the corresponding education portfolios.

2. Objective

The consultant's work will involve **desk research and analysis regarding mobile phone usage for education projects in sub-Saharan Africa**, with a focus on rural and low-income contexts with limited connectivity and infrastructure.

The consultant should identify best practice cases and provide technical guidelines on mobile phone usage in education projects, taking into account both online and offline uses (e.g., SMS). The consultant may offer primary research elements, such as interviews with leading stakeholders of organizations carrying out successful projects or user discussion groups. The identification of best practices should include an analysis of barriers to innovation, strategies used for overcoming them, identification of key factors for the success of innovation, and an analysis of the scalability of the innovation.

3. Activities and deliverables

The following activities are to be undertaken:

- A.1 Research on the use of mobile phones for education projects in rural communities with or without internet connection.
- A.2 Identification of technical requirements for the use of mobile phones in education projects aimed at rural communities.

The consultant is to submit the following products for approval by Ceibal Foundation:

- Report 1. A document describing the entire research. This document must include at least:
 - a) A list of education projects in rural communities using mobile telephony including uses of telephony with and without internet connection
 - b) Lessons learnt from best practice cases. The identification of best practices should include an analysis of barriers to innovation, strategies used for overcoming them, identification of key factors for the success of the innovation, and an analysis of the scalability of the innovation.
 - c) Technical guidelines on the use of mobile phones in education projects, taking into account both online and offline uses (e.g., SMS).



3.1 Summary of deliverables

Activities	Details of deliverables
A.1. Research on the use of mobile phones for education projects. A.2 Identifying technical requirements for the use of mobile phones in education projects aimed at rural communities.	Report 1. A document describing the entire research

4. Submitting proposals

The consultant must propose a **methodology** and **work plan** for the duration of the consultancy. The methodology should:

- include details of the activities and working days by activity planned for the implementation of the project. The details of the activities should specify the scope and objectives of each of them.
- state how many best practice cases you intend to analyze and how (e.g., what indicators will be used).
- specify the modality of desk information analysis (for instance, systematic literature review, bibliometrics, interpretative analysis, panel data), and the kind and source of information to be analyzed (for instance, academic publications, publications of international organizations, information in the media, or websites, among others). If interviews, surveys or other ways of gathering primary information are proposed, the scope (for instance, how many interviews or surveys) and implementation modality (for instance, semi-structured interviews) should be specified.
- outline the technical aspects related to mobile phone usage that will be assessed.

5. Consideration and method of payment:

The total amount associated with the consultancy is USD 3,000 (three thousand United States dollars) for the work described. Payments will be made according to the details below and the deadlines established in the work plan agreed between the parties at the beginning of this contract, and upon approval by Ceibal Foundation.

Failure to meet any of the above conditions – non-approval, and/or delivery past the deadline - will constitute a breach of contract which will preclude payment.

Achieving the milestone	Amount to be paid USD	% of total budget
Report 1. A document describing the entire research	3000	100%



Payments will be made in US dollars by bank transfer, the Ceibal Foundation covering only the expenses arising from the transfer in Uruguay, against receipt and approval of the deliverables mentioned in each payment milestone.

6. Deadline:

The final consultancy report must be completed before March 15, 2022.

7. Consultant's profile:

Interested consultants must have the following qualifications:

- Degree in computer science, information technology, innovation or related areas and postgraduate studies in education, or degree in education, social sciences or related areas and postgraduate studies in computer science, information technology, innovation.
- At least 10 years' professional experience in the area.
- Proven experience in projects on mobile phones, gender and rural communities.
- Proven experience in education projects implemented with mobile telephony in rural areas.
- Having at least one publication related to mobile telephony.
- Experience as a consultant with international organizations, such as the United Nations.
- Good analysis, synthesis, and report-writing skills. Command of English and French is an asset.

8. Applying to the call:

Applications should be emailed to: fundacion@ceibal.edu.uy with the subject line reading "**Application: Research**".

Those interested in applying to the call must produce the following documents:

- CV proving profile and background related to the object of this consultancy.
- Proposed methodology and work plan.

Applications failing to include these requirements will not be taken into account.

The call will be open until **7th January**. No proposals will be received beyond this deadline.



9. Assessment Criteria:

Assessment matrix.

Criteria to be assessed	Top score
1. Consultant's profile (75%)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Degree in computer science, information technology, innovation or related areas and postgraduate studies in education, or degree in education, social sciences or related areas and postgraduate studies in computer science, information technology, innovation.	Essential requirement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">At least 10 years' professional experience in the area.	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Proven experience in projects on mobile phones, gender and rural communities.	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Proven experience in education projects implemented with mobile telephony in rural areas.	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Publications related to mobile telephony.	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Experience as a consultant with international organizations, such as the United Nations.	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Good analysis, synthesis, and report-writing skills. Command of English and French is an asset.	10
2. Methodology and work plan (25%)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Methodology and work plan	25