

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Evaluation services for 'Réussite et Epanouissement via l'Apprentissage et L'Insertion au Système Educatif' (REALISE) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), implemented by Save the Children DRC.

Background to the GEC Programme and the Project

GEC programme background:

- The Department for International Development (DFID) leads the UK's work to end extreme poverty. DFID is tackling the global challenges of our time including poverty and disease, mass migration, insecurity and conflict. DFID's work is building a safer, healthier, more prosperous world for people in developing countries and in the UK too.
- DFID is working to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Progress on girls' education is critical to the achievement of these targets. SDGs 4 and 5 specifically relate to education and achieving gender parity. SDG 4 specifically notes 'inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning'.
- Globally 31 million primary age girls, have never been to school¹. And the majority of these girls come from the poorest and most marginalised communities in the most disadvantaged locations, ethnic groups etc.² Over the last 20 years primary enrolments for girls have improved along with boys but completion rates are equally low for both sexes. At the secondary level the differences between boys and girls' participation rates really start to show. Significant disparities exist within countries, with the poorest girls from rural areas most severely subject to educational disadvantage - even at the primary level³.
- The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) is helping the world's poorest girls improve their lives through education and supporting better ways of getting girls in school and ensuring they receive a quality of education to transform their future.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) and alliance partners have been contracted as the dedicated Fund Manager (FM) and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the GEC. This includes establishing the recipient tendering process, supporting bidders, sifting and scoring proposals, monitoring Value for Money (VfM) and making project funding recommendations for DFID approval. The FM also manages the relationships with the selected projects and oversees their Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning operations.

¹ United Nations, 2015. The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics. New York: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division. Sales No. E.15.XVII.8

² Idem

³ Idem

- Through the GEC, DFID provided £355m between 2012 and 2017 to the FM to disburse to 37 individual projects across 18 countries across sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia to help girl's education. In 2016 the GEC Transition window has been set up with additional DFID funding to support the original GEC beneficiaries continue their journey through stages of education and further improve their learning⁴.

Project background:

In the DRC, girls' first steps towards school are too often undermined by families and communities who do not recognise the value of educating them; by high costs and low household incomes; and by an array of threats to their wellbeing, from child marriage to gender-based violence. For the last four years, Vas-y Fille project (GEC 1) has been supporting a cohort of girls to improve their wellbeing and learning outcomes. REALISE picks up where Vas-y-Fille left off, supporting 75,000 girls in six provinces. The REALISE consortium is led by Save the Children, in partnership with World Vision and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Sussex. Save the Children will lead implementation in Ituri, Kassai Orientale, Lomami; World Vision will lead in Tanganyika, Haut-Katanga and Lualaba; while IDS will focus on operational research activities.

REALISE will help girls to access primary and secondary school through a suite of interrelated interventions. These are evidence-based (many of them were present in Vas-y Fille), but that evidence was not necessarily developed in the provinces we are supporting here. A lack of quality data constrains our ability to base interventions on context-specific evidence. We will therefore use monitoring data from the project and focussed primary research to build a better evidence base to allow us to constantly improve these interventions through the life of the project. This will include research into targeted drop-out interventions and attendance tracking.

Through **Promises, and Citizen Voice and Action**, families will learn how their girls will benefit from education, and are given the advocacy tools necessary for institutions to support them. Extrinsic motivators - such as bursaries - are replaced through Promises with intrinsic motivators (belief that education will lead to increased wellbeing for girls and their families). Families' behaviours change with their attitudes: they push schools to decrease fees and Provincial government to provide more financial support. At the same time, savings groups and bursaries increase families' financial capacity to provide for their girls' education.

The majority of girls we support will be young enough to access primary school; older girls will be able to follow an Accelerated Education route. In both cases, the costs of education remain a restraining factor: classrooms may have few textbooks and lessons may be taken by under-trained and demotivated teachers. Girls' time spent in school and their wellbeing whilst at school could likely be cut short by social challenges including the widespread conflict that affects the country. We will help resource the classrooms we are working in; we will build teachers' competencies and motivation through quality professional development; and we will help schools protect girls by preparing for conflict, helping with education at times of displacement, and providing psychosocial support to learners and teachers dealing with the after-effects. Through this resilient, better-resourced foundation, specific literacy and numeracy interventions will help girls to develop the fundamental

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/international-development-funding/girls-education-challenge#overview>

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competencies at the heart of the GEC project. From here, girls will be in a stronger position to pass their primary school-level exams.

Girls are most at risk of dropping out of education as they transition from primary or Accelerated Education to secondary education. The restraining factors identified above repeat and compound at this stage as girls are expected to marry and are more at risk of SGBV and recruitment by armed groups. All our enabling interventions will come into play to help girls overcome these challenges, to help them transition to secondary education; receive financial support to stay in school; and benefit from better-quality education. We are theorising that, by particularly concentrating interventions between Grade 4 and 9, we will build girls' resilience to the factors threatening their education and reduce the sharp rates of drop-out. We will continue to support the cohort of girls through their secondary education by working with their teachers to undertake professional development and by improving the quality of literacy and numeracy resources at these levels.

1. Overview of the project budget and implementation timescales (including number of evaluation points required for the project):

The project budget for four years (October, 2017 to October, 2021).

Our first year (to April 2018) focusses on supporting girls' immediate protection and economic needs. This includes financial support to cover the cost of AE centres and of girls taking their primary school leavers' exams. It also includes establishing child protection links with child protection committees and our child protection phone line/support package. At the same time, we will be building our capacity to support secondary education (to improve literacy, numeracy and teacher quality) and re-establishing teacher professional development work and savings and loans groups. In Years Two to Four the project will be working at full capacity; this includes providing bursaries to support transition to secondary schools; enabling more conflict-sensitive education work; and working with School Clubs to improve girls' voice and agency. A concurrent research agenda will help us phase out in Year Five in the most responsible way, with increased advocacy work at local and national level to address social and economic enabling and restraining factors for girls' education.

Evaluation points:

Evaluation:	Research design and field implementation:	Deadline:
Baseline survey*	March 2018 to June 2018	June 30 th , 2018
Midline survey	March 2019 to June 2019	June 30 th , 2019
Endline survey	March 2021 to June 2021	June 30 th , 2021

*Please note that this TOR is only for the Baseline evaluation. The other evaluations will be advertised in coming years.

2. Rationale for the Evaluation

The findings from the evaluation will primarily be used:

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- By the project management team, project partners and stakeholders to inform improvements in the delivery of the project during its lifetime;
- to demonstrate accountability for the funding received to DFID, other UK Government Departments, UK tax-payers, UK media;
- by the project management team to leverage additional resources from existing and new partners and stakeholders in order to scale-up and sustain the activities /benefits delivered by the project;
- by the project management team to support the on-going development and implementation of the project's sustainability and succession strategies;
- by partners, stakeholders and the Government to learn lessons from the project for the purpose of replicating what works elsewhere and/or taking up approaches and activities that have proven to work in order to scale up the project;
- by the Fund Manager to feed into and identify insights in order to inform programme level questions; and
- by other donors, academic institutions and education networks to inform the wider policy debate concerning the education of girls and marginalised girls.

3. Evaluation Objective

The project is seeking to procure the services of an independent External Evaluator to conduct a **mixed-method, gender-sensitive evaluation** that is inclusive of persons with disabilities of REALISE project over the next 4 years. The evaluation will assess the delivery, effectiveness, Value for Money (VfM) and impact of the project and report the findings and lessons learnt throughout the process.

4. Evaluation Questions

The Evaluation Team will be required to develop an evaluation approach that answers the following overarching questions as a minimum:

- **Process** – Was the project soundly designed and relevant to the targeted beneficiaries? Was it successfully implemented?
- **Impact** – What impact did the project have on the learning and transition of marginalised girls, including girls with disabilities? How and why was this impact achieved?
- **VfM** – Did the project demonstrate a good VfM approach?
- **Effectiveness** – What worked (and did not work) to increase the learning and transition of marginalised girls as defined by the project?
- **Sustainability** – How sustainable were the activities funded by the GEC and was the project successful in leveraging additional interest and investment?

Specific project and programme level evaluation questions are outlined in Section 4 of the MEL Framework. These questions help define the scope and focus of the project evaluation process. The successful bidder will be expected to work with the Project Management Team to review and revise these questions as appropriate at the outset of the project. **Project specific context** is important in this respect.

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5. Overall Evaluation Approach

The overall evaluation approach requires the Evaluation Team to design, plan and conduct a mixed-methods evaluation that is longitudinal in nature. More details on evaluation approach can be found in the FM's Evaluation Guidance.

A proportionate amount of time and resources should be allocated to the evaluation given the type of project interventions, operational context and the reporting requirements of the GEC.

6. Research design

The study will adopt a mixed-method quasi-experimental design, and will contain the following dimensions

- a. **Control groups:** bidders are required to outline their approach to evaluating the impact of the project. This should include consideration of the most rigorous approach to establishing a counterfactual. This should enable **comparison** of the outcomes achieved by a target group who were affected by a project intervention with the outcomes achieved by a group who are similar in every way to the target group, except that they have not in any way been exposed to or affected by the project intervention i.e. a control group. Careful consideration should be given to the use of quasi-experimental methods for this purpose.
- b. **Cohort tracking:** the project has decided to track, through its evaluation, one joint learning and transition cohort – defined as a group of individuals who progress through life (community or school) together. Bidders should outline their approach to tracking this cohort in both the control and intervention areas. See the Evaluation Guidance for more information on cohort tracking.
- c. **Measuring outcomes:** bidders are expected to understand the projects key and intermediate outcomes and suggest the most appropriate data collection approach to evaluate each outcome. This should include a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The Evaluator will be expected to design and pilot tools that will be used for data collection and refine as necessary.
- d. **Project sampling framework:** The Evaluation Team will be required to propose a valid sampling design for the evaluation, and help finalise the sampling frameworks for both qualitative and quantitative samples. These should be of a sufficient size and representativeness to allow:
 - reasonable levels of certainty that the findings are representative for the target population;
 - reasonable ability to generalise the intervention's effectiveness to similar contexts; and
 - reasonable ability to generalise the insights into what works and why for similar contexts.

During the baseline study, it is required that the external evaluators also conduct a **benchmarking sample, where both learning levels and transition rate will be measured**, in addition to the sample of beneficiaries for the evaluation. Please ensure to take this into consideration in your proposal and budget calculations.

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Please refer to the Evaluation Guidance for further information on sampling and section 6 of the MEL framework. A full list of schools and students per province will be provided by the Project Manager.

- e. **Baseline Study:** The Evaluation Team will be required to design and implement a **gender and disability sensitive baseline study** as an integrated part of the overall MEL strategy and plan for the project. This may include pre-baseline data collection to identify the target group and barriers to education. This study should identify the number of beneficiaries with disabilities as well as the type and severity of their disability (i.e. by following the UN Washington Group methodology⁵). Bidders should set out their approach to the baseline study.
- f. There are **three caveats / conditions** that the project team would like to specify regarding the quasi-experimental design of the evaluations:
 - During the previous phase of the project, the team of evaluators ran into a major challenge when collecting data in the field, as control schools refused to provide the information needed to the EE, and even refused to talk to them as they were very unhappy about not benefitting from any interventions from the project. To address this ethical issue, the REALISE team will be providing a minimal package to control schools/communities, which would include a “class kit” and a solar lamp. These two elements aren’t considered as intensive activities, nor expected to heavily affect the girls’ learning and transition outcomes in the control schools and communities’ setting.
 - The DRC, and especially the provinces where REALISE is being implemented, is categorized as an FCAS, where violence and internal displacement have increased quickly in the past year. This situation is unlikely to improve during the project life due to on-going political instability and insecurity. As such, the project is required to define a contingency plan for its programming, which means potentially transforming its current and “normal” package of interventions into an emergency package of education interventions (in line with the Education in Emergencies programming). When and if this happens, both treatment and control schools in emergency areas will all receive the education in emergency package, which means that they might not be comparable anymore, and can no longer be used for the DiD analysis. For both security and ethical reasons, when the project cannot continue with its “normal” package of interventions during a state of emergency in one or several affected areas, both the affected intervention and control schools will need to be excluded from the regular evaluation process. **Flexibility in regards to conflict affected schools** by the EE and the project will be required in order to ensure that results from evaluations are not biased. A larger initial sample will be collected in order to compensate for this higher attrition rate.
 - Throughout the project, if the team notices that a high number of project areas have become areas under the emergency status, and that a quasi-experimental design seems highly compromised, the project team will seek to conduct a cross-sectional pre-post study instead, using the initial data.

⁵ <http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/>

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The Evaluation Team will be required to complete the following tasks as part of the baseline evaluation process:

- Review the project's **MEL Framework**, and give input as necessary to help finalise the document for a sign-off by the Fund Manager.
- A **desk review** of relevant project documents and existing educational and demographic data for the project focus areas. The desk review will form the basis for a situational analysis.
- A **household survey** which measures families' socio-economic status, educational status, living conditions, vulnerability and attitudes towards education. This will include attitudes and expectations and how these interact with family decision-making on education. A household survey template will be provided by the GEC FM.
- A **girl's survey** which should be administered at school level in addition to the learning tests, measuring life skills (including self-esteem) and their perception and feeling about teaching quality.
- A **literacy and numeracy assessment** using adapted EGRA and EGMA for upper primary classes, and Secondary EGRA and Secondary EGMA for lower secondary classes. Guidance will be provided by the FM.
- **Other survey tools** as needed to fully assess and cover the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the project's intermediate outcomes and outcomes' results.

Note: all tools will be developed and owned by the external evaluator with the support from the project team and the FM, and need to be signed-off by the FM. All tools also need to be tested before being used to massively collect data.

7. Ethical protocols

- a. The evaluation approach must consider the safety of participants and especially children at all stages of the evaluation. The evaluation team will need to demonstrate how they have considered the protection of children through the different evaluation stages, including recruitment and training of research staff, data collection and data analysis and report writing.
- b. **Research ethics plan:** bidders are required to set out their approach to ensuring complete compliance with international good practice with regards to research ethics and protocols particularly with regards to safeguarding children, vulnerable groups (including people with disabilities) and those in fragile and conflict affected states. Consideration should be given to:
 - administrative, technical and physical safeguards to protect the confidentiality of those participating in research;
 - physical safeguards for those conducting research;
 - data protection and secure maintenance procedures for personal information;
 - parental consent concerning data collection from children or collation of data about children;
 - age- and ability-appropriate assent processes based on reasonable assumptions about comprehension for the ages of children and the disabilities they intend to involve in the research; and

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- age-appropriate participation of children, including in the development of data collection tools.

8. Risk and risk management

Risk management plan: It is important that the successful bidder has taken all reasonable measures to mitigate any potential risk to the delivery of the required outputs for this evaluation. Therefore, bidders should submit a comprehensive risk management plan covering:

- the assumptions underpinning the successful completion of the proposals submitted and the anticipated challenges that might be faced;
- estimates of the level of risk for each risk identified;
- proposed contingency plans that the bidder will put in place to mitigate against any occurrence of each of the identified risk;
- specific child protection risks and mitigating strategies, including reference to the child protection policy and procedures that will be in place (please note that all suppliers must adhere to the Child Safeguarding policy and will be briefed by the Child Safeguarding team); and
- health and safety issues that may require significant duty of care precautions.

9. Data quality assurance

Quality assurance plan: bidders are required to submit a quality assurance plan that sets out the systems and processes for quality assuring the evaluation and research process and deliverables from start to finish of the project. This plan should include the proposed approaches to:

- Piloting of all research activities;
- Training of enumerators and researchers conducting the mixed-methods primary research, including in research ethics;
- Logistical and management planning;
- Field work protocols and data verification including back-checking and quality control by supervisors in conjunction with Save the Children staff; and
- Data cleaning and editing before any analysis.

10. Existing Information Sources

- a. In the first instance, bidders should refer to the DFID GEC website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/girls-education-challenge>; for general information concerning the Girls' Education Challenge.
- b. Bidders should refer to the following GEC programme documentation:
 - Grant Recipient Handbook
 - MEL Guidance: Part 1 and Part 2
 - Logframe and workplan guidance

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- c. Bidders should refer to the following GEC project documentation that includes (at a minimum):
- Project LogFrame;
 - Project Full Application as included in the Accountable Grant Arrangement; and
 - Project MEL framework.
- d. Bidders should also refer to relevant country data and information that is currently available, as required, to prepare the proposal.

11. Professional Skills and Qualifications

Qualifications: bidders are required to clearly identify and provide CVs for all those proposed in the Evaluation Team, **clearly stating their roles and responsibilities** for this evaluation. Please name who in the team leads on gender and mixed methodologies and please provide their CVs. Please specify your level of presence in country and if any work will be subcontracted and to whom. Please note that if the enumeration is to be sub-contracted, the evaluator will be ultimately responsible for the enumerators they are subcontracting to.

The proposed evaluation person / team should include the technical expertise and practical experience required to deliver the scope of work and evaluation outputs, in particular with regards to:

- Evaluation design: the team should include skills and expertise required to design, plan and conduct **mixed-method impact evaluation**, potentially using **experimental or quasi-experimental techniques**;
- Skills in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, drawing findings from multiple sources and handling potential contradictions between data sets.
- Relevant subject matter knowledge and experience: knowledge and experience required on **conducting research with children, the education sector, disability and gender** to ensure that the evaluation design and research methods are as relevant and meaningful as possible given the aims and objectives of the project and the context in which it is being delivered;
- Evaluation management: manage a potentially large-scale and complex evaluation and research process from end-to-end, including conducting and reporting a baseline study and final project evaluation report
- Primary research: **gender-sensitive** design, management and implementation of primary quantitative and qualitative research in potentially challenging project environments, such as fragile and conflict affected states – this could include the design of longitudinal household panel surveys, EGRA /EGMA tests, in-depth interviews, focus groups, etc.;
- Knowledge in inclusion and disability: sound understanding of analysis that include inclusion and disability dimensions
- Country experience: it is particularly important that the team has the appropriate country knowledge /experience and **language proficiency** (French and English) required to conduct the research required;
- Information management: design and manage sex- and disability-disaggregated data and information systems capable of handling large datasets for MEL purposes;

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- Statistical analysis: a range of **statistical modelling and analysis** of impact data; highly proficient user of SPSS or STATA; and **qualitative data analysis** techniques, including the use of software e.g. ATLAS.ti, NVivo or equivalent where needed;
- VfM assessment of education projects: education economics expertise to conduct **cost benefit analysis and cost effectiveness analysis** as part of the assessment of the project's VfM; and
- Safety considerations: ensuring the whole evaluation process adhere to best practice for research with children including the implementation of **child protection policy and procedures to ensure safety of participants**. Note that all bidders are expected to be able to show that they have a child protection policy in place to **safeguard children** that the research team would come into contact with through the research activities.

Day-to-day project management of the evaluation will be the responsibility of Project Manager, with the technical support the project's MEAL Specialist.

12. Deliverables and Schedule

Project deliverables: the main deliverables for this project are as follows:

- Inception report: setting out the design of the MEL strategy and plan and associated planning, logistics, quality assurance, child protection measures and risk management information including gender analysis.
- Baseline study report: design, conduct and submit a baseline study that describes the initial conditions (before the start of the project) against which progress can be measured or comparisons made to show the effects and impacts of the project in the final project evaluation report. A final report structure will be provided by the FM.

Report requirements: all reports should be submitted in electronic form and should be submitted in English.

The Evaluation Team will be required to provide **face-to-face presentations in-country of all deliverables** as an integral part of the submission process. The Evaluation Team will be expected to provide a fully 'cleaned-up' dataset in SPSS, Stata or SAS file format accompanied by the code used to carry out analysis and a variable codebook.

Detailed work plan: bidders are required to provide a detailed work plan incorporating all relevant tasks and milestones from start to finish of the evaluation study.

Project milestones: bidders are required to include in their detailed work plans the milestones set out below.

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Typical project milestones /outputs for deliverables	Deadlines
Invitation to tender sent out to bidders	Feb 7, 2018
Deadline for receipt of tenders	March 11, 2018
Evaluation of tenders and shortlisting completed	March 14, 2018
Interviews of shortlisted suppliers held	March 21, 2018
Supplier appointed	March 23, 2018
1. Inception Phase	Deadlines
Inception Meeting held	March 28, 2018
Literature/document review & data gathering completed	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Review of project's theory of change, impact logic and evaluability completed	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Stakeholder consultation completed	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Child protection framework developed	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Sampling framework for primary research for baseline completed	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Design of data collection strategy including cohort tracking design completed	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Design of primary research instruments for baseline completed	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Draft Inception Report (including design of baseline study) submitted for review and comments by Project Manager and Project Partners.	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Presentation to Evaluation Steering Group	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Review complete and comments returned to supplier	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Final Inception Report submitted	April 13, 2018
2. Baseline Study Phase	Deadlines
Tool development and piloting	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Baseline research starts	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Baseline research completed	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Draft Baseline Study Report submitted for review	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Presentation to Evaluation Steering Group	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Review by Project Management and stakeholders completed /comments provided to Supplier	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Supplier addresses comments and revises Baseline Study Report	<i>Bidder to complete</i>
Final Baseline Study Report submitted to the Project Manager	June 25 th , 2018

13. Reporting and Contracting Arrangements

The Evaluation Team will be expected to identify a Project Manager for communication and reporting purposes. At the Inception meeting the Evaluation Team Project Manager will be expected to submit a full contact list of all those involved in the evaluation.

The Evaluation Team will be expected to attend and report to the Evaluation Steering Group and attend all meetings as agreed with the Project Evaluation Manager. The Team will be required to submit to the Project Evaluation Manager bi-weekly progress reports (by email) during the study periods summarising activities /tasks completed to date (per cent achieved), time spent etc.

14. Budget

The budget range for this work is £315,000- 330,000 GBP although the project team will appreciate and select from the most cost-effective proposals. The budget should cover the data collection,

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analysis and reporting for baseline evaluation. This budget is inclusive of all costs covering team member costs, travel, research costs and any other costs associated for the completion of the work, including where required costs for reasonable adjustment. Bidders are required to organise and fund their own duty of care arrangements as required.

Bidders are required to provide a fully costed proposal in the form of a price schedule that as a minimum should include:

- Sub-total of fees for the delivery of any task or deliverable;
- Sub-total for number of days per partner organisation (as applicable);
- Expenses and overheads broken down by the project cost categories: project management costs and staff (study team inputs – broken down by the number of days for each individual study team member against each of the tasks set out in the detailed work plan, daily rates for each team member, total number of days per team member, and total fees per team member), qualitative training and data collection, quantitative training and data collection (including staff time, travel and accommodation);
- Reasonable adjustment costs; and
- Total costs before and after any taxes that are applicable.

Bidders are required to provide a payment schedule on the basis of milestone payments for the successful delivery of each deliverable.

15. Submissions Details and Selection weighting

All bidders will be required to submit each of the following documents that will be weighted on a scale of 100 points :

- A full technical proposal (45 Points)
- A detailed budget according to guidance provided in the Terms of Reference (25 points)
- A completed timeline for the process with implementation plan (10 points)
- A full technical expertise review as requested by the Terms of Reference (10 points)
- 2 previous similar pieces of work that include quantitative and qualitative analysis (10 Points)
- A proof legal entity status (required)

Kinshasa, 07 February 2018

Heather KERR

Country Director
Save the Children International DRC



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