

Questions & Answers

Date: November 17, 2023

Reference Request for Proposal Number: RFP-CATALYZE-Edu-2023-0107

Dear Offerors,

Please see below answers to the questions submitted regarding the above RFP:

No.	Question	Answer
1	What data collection techniques or tools do you plan to use to assess children's development and/or learning? How long will it take approximately to apply the data collection instrument(s) to each child? What dimensions of child development should be considered for the assessment?	<p>The final tools have not been selected yet, but our preference is for a holistic direct child assessment for children aged 3 – 5 (e.g., IDELA) that will capture literacy, numeracy, socio-emotional skills, executive function. The direct child assessment would take approximately 30-45 minutes, and per child.</p> <p>The emphasis will be on children aged 3 – 5, but if assessment of children under 3 is incorporated, a caregiver-reported tool is preferable (e.g., ECDI2030, CREDI, GSED). The assessment should not take more than 30 minutes per child.</p>
	Will any development or learning evaluation instruments be applied to the children of the beneficiaries? This is important to clarify to include this data collection in the budget. Do you have a preference for a particular standardized instrument for assessing children?	Yes, children will be assessed. We prefer a direct assessment like the IDELA instrument for children aged 3 – 5 years. If younger children are included, a caregiver-reported tool is acceptable.
2	How many children in total will be part of the sample? Should all the children of the 1600 mothers be included or only one child per mother, or is the number of children already included in the 1600, and if so, could it be 800 women and 800 children?	One child per mother will be included in the sample. If a woman has more than one child, the oldest child under 6 will be selected to participate.
3	How many ECCE Project centers exist for the implementation of activities and in which departments are they geographically located?	54 centers in Capital, Central, Alto Parana, Caayuzu, San Pedro, Concepcion, Ituapa, Iturbe Guaire, Misiones, Presidente Hayes departments (10)
4	Which are the centers selected for the interviews with mothers? It is necessary to have tentative locations to estimate fieldwork costs. The bidding document does not mention the total number of centers or their locations (districts, urban or rural area).	See above

5	Who are the implementing organizations for the interventions?	Three local organizations that focus on early childhood care and education with ties to communities across the departments in Paraguay
6	Will all of the intervention activities (access of children from 0 to 6 to ECCE, professionalization of providers, promotion of solutions to improve the employability of female caregivers, as well as technical and vocational training activities) be developed in the ECCE centers?	All centers will receive ECCE intervention related to children and professionalization of providers. Female caregiver technical and vocational training and social norms engagement activities directed to male household members will be assigned to a subset of centers
7	In addition to having children enrolled in the ECCE, are there other requirements to be a beneficiary?	Not at this time
8	Will it be possible for there to be beneficiaries of the project who do not have children in the centers?	No
9	Will there be a list of women with their contact information to coordinate interviews?	Yes, for women whose children are enrolled in ECCE centers.
10	Will there be a list of participating women by training center?	Yes
11	Is there a single list of beneficiaries/children registered in the centers? Currently, what is the existing number of possible beneficiaries? Will there be a waiting list to enter the program?	At this time, we estimate 5,891 children to be enrolled in the ECCE centers across the three implementing organizations. We do not know if there will be waiting list to enter the program.
12	What is the estimated duration of the questionnaire and the learning assessment? Will there be different versions?	The women's interview will be somewhat lengthy, and will likely take 60-90 minutes. The assessment for children will take approximately 30-45 minutes. All children will receive the same version of the assessment.
13	Is a probabilistic sample design expected?	Yes
14	For the control group, do the centers have information about potential beneficiaries with children who do not participate in the centers?	Approach to identifying respondents for the control group is not finalized, but will likely involve asking women with children enrolled in ECCE to identify friends or neighbors who do not have their children enrolled in ECCE.
15	The ToRs mention a "quasi-experimental" design. If treatment is not randomly assigned, what are criteria for assigning beneficiaries to the different treatment groups?	Treatment arms will be assigned by center. That is, specific centers will be assigned to each intervention arms, and all women with children attending these centers will be invited to participate. Centers for the treatment centers will be selected to ensure appropriate geographic and implementing partner distribution in each study arm.
16	Do the children who attend the centers include children who attend pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or preschool at public or private educational institutions?	Yes
17	Is a tracking of x% between women and children of the baseline and endline expected?	If by %, you mean tracking attrition, then yes, it is expected as this is a cohort design study. Values will be compared by treatment group from baseline to endline.

18	The document mentions 400 surveys to women per treatment arm, but it does not specify if it is at the level of the 6 departments or per department. It also does not specify how many evaluations of children, but it is understood that they should be the same number as surveys, although the number of children may be higher for each woman. Finally, it is not clear to us the overall total number of surveys of women, and the total number of surveys of their children.	We anticipate a total of 1,600 women across the four treatment arms (400 each), spread across the departments. See responses to #2 and #15 above.
19	Which institution is Co Pi in Paraguay? Any other entity that must approve? It is important to consider time and costs.	No institution has been identified as co-PI yet in Paraguay, ideally it would be the research firm awarded this subcontract. Costs for required local ethical review board approval should be included in the budget.
20	Could you share the questionnaire to see the type of questions? Estimate coding time? How many open-ended?	The questionnaire will be developed collaboratively with the selected research firm.
21	Is it possible to change the field start date to early March 2024 for baseline and March 2025 for endline?	Baseline must be completed ahead of intervention start, which is currently scheduled for February/March 2024. Similarly, endline must occur before the end of the ECCE grants which terminate in March 2025.
21	The ToR mention an 8-year project implementation timeline, however, the endline evaluation is planned for 1 year after implementation (2025). Is this correct?	The timeline for the specific interventions to be evaluated are from March 2024 through March 2025.
22	Is only 1 final report required, or 1 for baseline and 1 for endline?	Two reports, one for baseline and one for endline (comparing to baseline)
23	What are the expected presentations or webinars to be made? Are PowerPoints expected from the company? How many hours approx. of presentations and modalities?	Two PPTs, one for baseline and one for endline. Number of hours will depend on extent of results to be presented.
24	What kinds of dissemination activities are expected?	Baseline and endline workshops.
25	Should the technical and cost proposal include both baseline and endline data collection?	Yes
26	What is the UEI? And where can it be requested? In the case of alliances between organizations, is it mandatory for both or only for the organization that will sign the contract?	UEI, or unique entity ID number, is a number assigned by the US government for every organization that applies for one through sam.gov. It is free to obtain a UEI and is required for all subcontractors who receive more than \$30,000 in USAID funding.
27	Regarding the documents requested for the technical proposal, what content and format are expected for the Background and Relevant expertise of the firm (b), Past Experience/Capability Statement (c), and Description of Relevant Projects (f). What is the difference among these three documents?	We do not have a template for these; they should be included as a short write-up. Background and relevant expertise can include the history of the org, description of staff expertise, etc. Past experience and capabilities statement refers to experience that will inform their ability to do this scope of work. Relevant projects are past projects they've worked on that highlight their ability to execute this SOW.
28	Should the cost proposal include both baseline and endline data collection?	Please detail cost of various elements for each phase of the evaluation.

29	Is Defense Base Act (DBA) insurance in accordance with FAR 52.228-3 applicable to this proposal? If so, how is it procured and how can we estimate its cost?	Yes, DBA insurance is required for all subcontractors. You can procure it via Starr Indemnity & Liability Company (Starr). It is about 7% of staff time, but you should reach out to them for a more updated quotation.
30	The Due Diligence Questionnaire was not included with the ToR. Should it be included with the proposal or only by the selected firm? The ToRs are contradictory with regard to this point.	The due diligence questionnaire has been included as an attachment. Please fill it out now to have ready with your proposal submission.
31	Has the project implementation started? If not, when is it expected to start and end?	The timeline for the specific interventions to be evaluated are from February/March 2024 through March 2025.
32	Is it feasible to adjust deliverables and payment schedule to reduce the number of transactions and increase the available liquidity for the endline data collection?	The number of deliverables cannot be changed, but the value to be paid per deliverable may be negotiated with the selected firm.