



Terms of Reference

Relating to: Consultancy Assignment to Install and Execute ICT-GIS based Monitoring and Decision Support for Equity in Education

About PACS :

Poorest Areas Civil Society Programme [PACS] is an initiative of the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) in partnership with civil society. PACS helps socially excluded communities to claim their rights and entitlements more effectively. PACS focuses on socially excluded groups including scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, Muslims, women and people with disability. This seven-year programme (2009-2016) aims to support civil society organisations (CSOs) in promoting inclusive local, district and state policies, programmes and institutions. It focuses on areas of livelihood, education, health and nutrition in gender and rights perspectives.

PACS programme is being implemented in 90 districts across 7 states of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. PACS programme is managed by the IFIRST Consortium (Indian Forum for Inclusive Response and Social Transformation), the management consultants for the programme which is a consortium of five organizations led by Christian Aid with Caritas India, Financial Management Service Foundation (FMSF), Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS) and Access Development Services.

One of the key thematic focus of PACS programme is to ensure inclusive, equitable and discrimination free access to quality education to children from socially excluded groups (SEGs). Within the framework of RTE, PACS Programme works on strengthening and implementation of key components of SSA including access, retention, and transition into higher classes in a discrimination free child friendly educational environment. It envisages centrality of classroom practices and process which brings quality with equity.

PACS adopts multi- pronged strategy while working on right to education. The focus is both on the demand and supply side wherein the PACS supported CSOs engage with the communities to strengthen their voice and increase their understanding as to how to make school and government accountable and enable them to recognize education under a rights framework. The Programme also focuses on empowering CSOs and community based groups to monitor the functioning of the schools, the quality of the services rendered through the SMCs/VECs. Social accountability tools like social audits, public hearing and community score cards are being used by the communities to strengthen the accountability of the educational System.

PACS' Priorities on Education

- Discrimination free regular access to MDM by children from SEGs
- Increase in enrolment, retention and transition of children from SEGs
- Discrimination free classroom transactions and school environment
- Representation of SEGs in decision making committees and in monitoring quality education

PACS is intervening on education in 152 blocks of 47 districts in seven states of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. It has made its direct presence in over 5000 elementary schools in these areas through 34 CSOs partners.

Objective of Assignment :

Eightysixth amendment of the Constitution of India inserted Article 21-A to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in India. Further, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act was passed in 2009, to guarantee complete elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school to every child. SSA provisions were also revamped in the light of RTE norms.

The RTE sets some minimum standards to be achieved to ensure satisfactory and equitable quality of education which includes physical infrastructure, availability of teachers, availability of books and learning resource material. The Act also has provisions for child friendly environment of school where children can learn without fear and anxiety. RTE system also provides the opportunity to local community to participate in decision making in education system. New SSA guidelines depicts role of civil society organizations (CSOs), SMC/VEC, PTA, Self Help Groups (SHGs), youth clubs, Mahila Samooch and representatives of disadvantaged groups in ensuring transparency and accountability of the education system.

To quote revised SSA guidelines *'it would be impossible for RTE as well as SSA to succeed without people's support and ownership. The RTE mandate for age-appropriate admission of every out-of-school child, special training for each child to enable her to cope in school, promoting child-friendly child centered and activity based learning processes, which is free of anxiety, trauma and fear sets the agenda for proactive community participation'*. Community participation can address and improve infrastructural issues, discrimination issues, day to day management of schools and other local issues which are required to be addressed for ensuring that children from all the SEGs attend schools and have desired learning outcomes.

Although, extensive effort have been made to ensure community participation through formal and informal platform, there are still scope to enhance the participation in the education system. The participation can be multifold increased if community members are equipped with micro and macro level information, and work together with teachers and government officials.

While the community have a ready access to micro information like availability of infrastructure and other arrangements at the school in their village their comprehension of the macro picture including the gap between what is desirable and what exists there as well as how that compares with the district average or the state average is limited. This is largely due to unavailability of any system to do so.

On the other hand those who are aware of the macro picture do not have a clear knowledge of the status at the individual school level, except the statistics generated annually, and they can hardly guide or take local action on a continuous basis using that statistics. The need is to present a global vision for internalization by ordinary members of the community for triggering local action towards universal and desired quality education.

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) coupled with Geographic Information System (GIS) provides solutions to such problems and the same has been already demonstrated successfully in several cases. ICT with GIS backbone can capture data on all school related parameters along with how that compares with the macro picture.

With a MIS component which processes all information and the GIS provides spatial information which helps to present all data and related analysis on thematic maps it is possible to have easy and effective visualization as well as internalization of the issues and actions involved. The system can show the actual and near realtime status and the shortfall from standard, by presenting the status of the particular school and the standard set under the RTE, in respect of any selected parameter. It is also possible to present how the progress in respect of

any parameter related to functioning of any school compares with average/best among other schools of the block/district. Another big advantage is that all such systems being web-enabled everyone from school up to any supervisory level can easily visualize the status for any area as a whole and drill down from higher level (showing aggregate status) to the school level. The GIS backed system helps to easily identify what has failed, at which location and by how much for generating action at both higher and local levels.

The ICT-GIS based monitoring system can be also most effective system for ensuring system efficiency and information sharing. It produces evidences which is verifiable, accessible to many through use of Information & Communication Technology (ICT); able to generate and share reports & SMS and most importantly it has potential to engage all the concerned stakeholders on particular issue. ICT based monitoring systems with GIS backbone are being used in many areas including monitoring of malnutrition status of children, e.g., katol.sun.net.in & tdh.net.in, but its use in monitoring elementary education is limited, particularly because of complex nature of performance indicators.

Objectives of the assignment

In light of the above context following are the objectives of this assignment:

- To ensure compliances on RTE provisions in 1000 elementary schools through piloting ICT based- GIS backboned monitoring system
- To provide evidences on gaps in schools for better decision making and strengthening the education system
- To ensure responsiveness in functioning of academic and administrative support system
- To ensure democratic and inclusive participation of all the stakeholders of RTE system including SEGs in strengthening the RTE system

Scope of Work :

Scope of work includes the following:

1. Installation of ICT based monitoring System

The finalized agency is expected to create and manage ICT based system with GIS backbone for empirical evidence based advocacy and decision making. The agency need to create all required applications and devices to capture primary and secondary data, real time data, photographs, and audio/video files. It is expected to design interactive website and process all the data into relevant information, in its simplest form. While the ownership of the website will be of PACS, the responsibility of regular maintenance and updating will be with the agency. The tasks include the followings:

- Preparation of application for mobile phones to capture information. The application will also allow capturing photographs and transmitting the same to the server
- Customizing GIS for selected schools
- Designing and hosting website with customize viewing modules/ dashboards, and customized stakeholder reporting module
- Customizing web based system for data capturing, processing, and generating reports. It also includes data transcription.

2. Data Collection

The scope of work includes data collection from primary and secondary sources including real time data. Data for certain categories are already available with DISE for all schools. For such data, only periodic updation will be required. Primary data will be collected from field on regular intervals. The data may be transmitted through

android mobile/apparatus, including audio form, which later transcribed and uploaded on website. Data also includes pictures and audio/video clips. The task include the followings:

- Finalizing set of data which is relevant for the initiative
- Design methodology and tools for capturing data including samples of learning assessment of children
- Periodic visits to selected schools, regular collection and inputting the data including pictures, audio/video clips in agreed format
- Conduct learning assessment of randomly selected children from SEGs in agreed format to assess status and progress of learning levels of children
- Report data on the day of the visits including audio and video clips of important stakeholders
- Highlight any significant issues/incidences happened in any covered school immediately for required action

3. Generating and sharing reports

Periodic reports will be required to be generated on selected issues to share status and development on the issues with concerned stakeholders under RTE system. The report will be in the form of system generated SMS, system generated emails having link to the website and detailed status or progress report on each selected issue. Detailed status report will also be prepared for block, district and state level advocacy. The task in this regard will include the following:

- In consultation with PACS finalize list of stakeholders to whom SMS and/or emails and/or progress reports will be shared
- Generate SMS, emails and detailed reports on status and progress made on selected issues, and to share it with concerned stakeholders on regular basis
- Generate school report cards for each selected schools under the initiative highlighting current status, gaps and progress made in last quarter

4. Advocacy on identified gaps

Advocacy need to be built to address the identified gaps at all levels including schools, blocks, district and state. The agency will be responsible to conduct all such efforts which is necessary to address the identified gaps.

5. Progress Monitoring and Sharing

Progress made due to continuous monitoring and advocacy will required to be captured by the agency on each selected parameters and will be shown and shared with stakeholders. The status or progress report will also need to be shared by the agency with government officials and other stakeholders. Following meetings will be conducted for sharing the status and progress made due to the initiative

- Periodic school level meetings need to be conducted involving SMC members, headmasters, teachers, parents and children to share the progress and concerns. The discussion is expected to be based on school report card.
 - Periodic cluster level meetings need to be conducted involving headmasters, teachers, CRCs and BRCs to discuss gaps in quality in education and strategy to deal with it. The discussion will be based on learning assessment of randomly selected children from SEGs.
 - Block level Consultations need to be conducted involving block level education officers to discuss schools level administrative issues. The discussion will be based on block-level status reports. It should be conducted twice in a year in intervention blocks.
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- District level Consultations need to be conducted involving block and district level education officers to discuss schools level administrative and academic issues. The discussion will be based on district-level status reports. It should be conducted twice in a year in intervention district.
- State level Consultations need to be conducted involving district and state level education officers, SCPCR, department of education and wider civil society to discuss schools level administrative and academic issues. The discussion will be based on state-level status reports. It should be conducted twice in a year. First state level consultations will only be conducted after preparation of state level report which will be based on school, cluster, block and district level findings. Second state level consultation will be conducted in the end of the programme with similar due processes.

Timeframe :

The proposed assignment is for a year, expected to be completed by November 2015

Eligibility criteria for the consultant :

PACS is looking forward to the following qualifications and expertise in the individual / agency to be contracted for this assignment:

1. Proven expertise and track record in developing and managing website, GIS and software/applications
2. Prior experience in developing and demonstrating ICT-GIS based monitoring system especially those which are compatible with mobile phones
3. Sound understanding and prior experience of working on Right to Education
4. Relevant working experience in West Bengal and thorough knowledge of the regional context and trends;
5. Sound understanding of civil society action on education especially on collaborative and joint initiatives with the government
6. Sound organizational human resource capacities and financial liability
7. Good communications, analytical skills and high proficiency in written and spoken English and Bengali

Reporting & Coordination :

The consultant will report to Director PACS or any person designated for the task on all deliverables at agreed timelines.

Key Deliverables			
			PAYMENT (IN %)
1	Inception report containing finalized list of schools, stakeholders, tools and methodologies for capturing		10

	data, and format for customized stakeholder reporting		
2	Installation of ICT based monitoring system with functional website with customize viewing modules/ dashboards, and customized stakeholder reporting module		15
3	Functional website with primary, secondary and real-time data, and customize reporting		25
4	Acceptance of report on first state level consultation		20
5	Acceptance of report on second state level consultation and handing over of the website and its management to PACS or any party designated by PACS at the end of the project		30