**Annex 4 – Goods and services specification**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**For**

**Local Data Collection Partner for Usability Study Plan for CEHRD Learning Portal**

BACKGROUND

The Government currently provides 425 multimedia activity modules to support children’s learning in 4 topics (Math, Science, English and Nepali) for grades 1-10, with workbooks and storybooks for pre-school children. These modules are openly available to access on the CEHRD portal at <https://learning.cehrd.edu.np>, and have been promoted during the pandemic for students and teachers who are working from home. The modules can be accessed freely online by anyone with appropriate tech and internet, and/or can be downloaded for offline use.

OBJECTIVE OF ASSIGNMENT

The School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) Technical Assistance (TA) team is implemented by the British Council (BC) to support the government’s strategy for school level education. The TA has conducted a review of the CEHRD Learning Portal that focused on web analytics to provide quantitative data about the portal’s use. While many assumptions can be drawn from those data, a qualitative usability study is an essential next step in order to understand the reality of user experience.

This new study is intended to capture behavioural data and to answer the following design-related questions:

* What do teachers and children experience when they are openly exploring the portal?
* What do teachers and children experience when they are directed to find and use specific content within the portal?
* How do parents feel about supporting their children’s use of the portal?

A local partner is sought who can provide data collection services to support this study being conducted by the SSDP TA.

SCOPE AND DETAIL

**Study format**

In ideal conditions this study would be conducted by researchers recording in-person observation in users’ homes, in the conditions in which users would most naturally be engaging with the portal as a remote resource. After observing behaviours, the researcher would then be able to ask open-ended questions to explore what the user was thinking and feeling at key moments.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it is not possible to conduct live observation in person, and bandwidth and technology restrictions make it unrealistic to plan for live remote observation. It is therefore necessary to design a format that asks users to self-report on their behaviour, and to depend that this provides an accurate basis for the follow up discussions.

The data collection partner will identify participants and work remotely with them to collect data.

**Participants**

Primary users are defined as children from government schools in Grades 1-10, using the portal as a remote resource for curriculum-based learning. Secondary users are their schoolteachers, who will be directing them to use the portal.

Ultimately the portal is intended to reach all children of school age across Nepal. However we know from the analytics that it is currently most used in urban areas, where children and teachers have greatest access to the devices and data packages needed for use of the portal.

Pragmatically, this study is about the experience and behaviour of those users who are able to access the site now, informing long term development of the site as a high-quality platform that is available to meet demand as access to suitable technologies increases for users in more remote areas.

At this stage it therefore makes sense to adopt predominantly convenience sampling, and work with a small set of users in Kathmandu who are directly available to the data collection partner. They should be fully representative as genuine participants (i.e. not proxy users who would not otherwise be expected to find the portal useful) and approximately balanced by gender.

The following participants are proposed:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Teachers** | 3 from grades 1-5 | **Children** | 4 from grades 1-5 | **Parents** | of participant children |
|  | 3 from grades 6-8 |  | 4 from grades 6-8 |  |  |
|  | 3 from grades 9-10 |  | 4 from grades 9-10 |  |  |

It is essential that study participants have never tried to access the site before.

Participants should have their own suitable device for connecting to the internet, and access to data. Basic socio-economic indicators should be recorded for all participants and they should receive a small payment for their time and be reimbursed for any data costs incurred. An information sheet will explain the study to the participants and make it clear that they can choose to withdraw at any time. The data collection partner will be responsible for ensuring that participants understand the study, and have given informed consent through the signing of a form as provided.

**Tasks and tools**

Task instructions and record sheets will be delivered in Nepali.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 |
| Children | Each child will be asked to open and explore the site. They will complete an age appropriate record sheet to capture each step that they take, what prompted their movement around (or away from) the site at each step, to select from a standard range of emotional indicators (confused, interested, etc) at each step and to note any additional thoughts/reflections. | Each child will then be asked to complete a specific set of activities within the site, as appropriate to age/grade, and similarly to complete a record sheet as they go. For example:  Find an activity that teaches you how to do X  Go to the activity for Grade X, topic Y, that includes Z. | Each child will be interviewed remotely, using guided, open-ended questions to  Draw out more detail about their task-based responses, and  Gather their responses to additional specific questions about accessibility and usability. |
| Teachers | Same as children step 1. | Same as children step 2, with activities appropriate to grade taught. | Each teacher will be interviewed remotely, using guided, open-ended questions to  Draw out more detail about their task-based responses, and  Gather their responses to additional specific questions about including the portal in their teaching plans. |
| Parents | Parents should observe their children completing task Step 1 and record any interventions that they make. | Parents should observe their children completing task Step 2 and record any interventions that they make. | Each parent will be interviewed remotely, using guided, open-ended questions to  Capture their thoughts after watching their children use and reflect on the portal, and  Gather their responses to additional specific questions about supporting their children to learn online. |

The data collection partner will conduct and record interviews in Nepali and provide these record files to the TA. The data collection partner will not be responsible for transcription and translation, which will be budgeted and conducted separately through standard BC services.

In addition to the above study, the data collection partner will conduct structured interviews with the following:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Headteachers** | 3 | **Children who have previously used the portal** | 3 from grades 1-5  3 from grades 6-8  3 from grades 9-10 |

**Pilot study**

A pilot study will be conducted with one child and their parent, and feedback used to refine instructions for study tasks and tools.

SCHEDULE

**Workplan**

The partner will be responsible for activities in the white rows as shown below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | WK1 | WK2 | WK3 | WK4 | WK5 | WK6 | WK7 | WK8 | WK9 | WK10 |
| Identify and secure participants |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Conduct pilot |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pilot translation and analysis period |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Children and parents study complete |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teachers study complete |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Children and headteachers interviews complete |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Translation and analysis period |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Review and comment on final report |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

ACTIONS FOR THE LOCAL PARTNER

* Identify participants and verify suitability
* Provide list of participants for approval
* Brief pilot participants on the study and secure informed consent
* Brief pilot participants on the tasks and time manage their Step 1 and Step 2 tasks
* Interview pilot participants (using guided interview sheets as provided by TA)
* Provide pilot participant record sheets and recorded interview files for BC transcription/translation
* Brief all participants on the study and secure informed consent
* Brief all participants on the tasks and time manage their Step 1 and Step 2 tasks
* Interview study participants (using guided interview sheets as provided by TA)
* Brief additional study participants (i.e. headteachers and children who have previously used portal) and secure informed consent
* Interview additional study participants (using guided interview sheets as provided by TA)
* Provide study participant record sheets and recorded interview files for BC transcription/translation
* Manage disbursement of payments to participants

REQUIREMENTS OF LOCAL PARTNER

The partner should

* Have sound relationships with at least 8 Government schools in the wider Kathmandu area
* Have at least 10 years organisational experience in collecting and managing data using a range of methods for research and/or project monitoring and evaluation purposes
* Be able to demonstrate how they will assign resources to manage the work to schedule