CONSULTANT(S) for Assessment and Research

Terms of Reference (ToRs)

Positions: 2
Reports to: Program Manager, Assessment and Research
Duration: Initially for 3-6 months
Start date: Immediate

About PAL Network
The People’s Action for Learning (PAL) Network is a south-south partnership of 15 members working across Africa, Asia and the Americas to assess children’s basic reading and numeracy skills. PAL members conduct citizen-led assessment (CLA) and action intervention programs aimed at improving learning outcomes. Registered as a standalone NGO in Nairobi (Kenya), PAL Network was formed to accelerate and coordinate the shared work of its members towards achieving its vision of a world where all children have a foundation for lifelong learning.

About Assessment and Research Focus Areas at PAL Network
PAL Network has identified four Focus Areas in its new 2020-2023 Strategy – Assessment, Action, Research and Advocacy. CLAs have been the foundation for all other Focus Areas and the new strategy aims to boost these assessments both thematically as well as geographically. In 2019, PAL Network members designed and implemented ICAN (International Common Assessment of Numeracy) in 1 rural district in each participating country. ICAN reached over 26,000 children in 13 PAL Network countries. In 2020 (and beyond), PAL Network is working towards expanding and strengthening its common assessment initiative. Research Focus Area explores new questions and themes aligned to PAL Network’s vision and their answers through shared efforts across the members.

Scope of work and reporting
The Consultant(s) will support Assessment and Research projects by reviewing literature, analysing policies/curriculum/program-related content, creating and administering assessment frameworks and instruments and any other tasks related to Assessment and Research Focus Areas. Consultant(s) will report to Program Manager, Assessment and Research and will collaborate with Assessment Working Group members based internationally.

Detailed tasks
- Ideate, conduct literature review, prepare and publish research reports to support PAL Network’s Common Assessments.
- Conduct secondary review of the policy landscape and curriculum, create assessment frameworks, instruments and related manuals.
- Design and participate in field pilot studies and analyse pilot data to understand broad trends and identify gaps in the instruments. Write reports documenting the pilot process and findings.
- Participate in designing and managing research tasks as part of the focus area

Expected outputs
- Compiled assessment documents from PAL Network members
Minimum qualifications

Education
Minimum graduate. Advanced degree in education, economics, policy analysis, development studies or any related field is an advantage.

Work experience
- Minimum 2 years’ full-time work experience, preferably in a similar role or development / management consulting.

Communication
- Strong attention to detail.
- Ability to correspond with a diverse and cross-cultural audience.
- Clear and precise communication skills (oral and written) in English is essential.
- Working proficiency in French, Spanish or Portuguese will be an advantage.

Technical
- Proficiency in MS Office – Word, PowerPoint, Excel is essential.
- Experience of working on other advanced data analysis platforms (SPSS, STATA, R etc.) and/or data visualization platforms (Tableau, Power BI etc.) will be an advantage.
- Experience of designing and implementing assessment/research/M&E projects is preferred.
- Experience of research writing is a plus.

Organisation
- Takes initiative, thinks innovatively and learns independently.
- Respects diversity and is able to work in large and small groups.
- Open to rural/international travel for long and short durations for trainings, field pilots, meetings and workshops (post COVID normalcy).

Application process
To apply, email the following to jobs@palnetwork.org and copy Ketan Verma on ketan@palnetwork.org
1. CV (including work history, education, projects, core skills and accomplishments) - 2 page max.
2. Statement of Purpose (SOP) describing why, how, and what makes you a good fit for this role. Please give specific examples that align with these ToRs - 800 words max.

Incomplete applications will not be considered. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for three subsequent rounds: virtual discussion, written assignments, and final interview.

Last date of application: 7th September 2020