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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Request for Information Number: 72060821BMSRFI-0002
Issue Date: June 2, 2021
Deadline to submit feedback: June 23, 2021
Closing Time: 12:00pm (noon) Rabat, Morocco Time
Anticipated Activity Title: Bridge to Middle School
Anticipated Award mechanism: Cooperative Agreement
Anticipated Timeframe: 5 years (2022-2027)
Anticipated Total estimated Amount: \$20-25 million
(Subject to availability of funds)

To All interested Parties:

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development in Morocco (USAID/Morocco), is in the process of determining how a potential program provisionally entitled “Bridge to Middle School” might further its stated strategic goals of improving the efficacy and efficiency of the Moroccan education system.

The main purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to determine the soundness and robustness of the general design for a systems strengthening and capacity building intervention for the Ministry of Education in Morocco. Information provided will assist USAID/Morocco to make planning decisions. Areas of particular interest to USAID/Morocco under this RFI include:

- 1) reactions from USAID partners and the public to the draft, potential, proposed theory of change;
- 2) information about documented strengths and weaknesses of the Moroccan upper primary and middle school education system in the public schools, and;
- 3) any other information experienced members of the public believe would be important for USAID to take into account in its continued program development efforts for systems strengthening in the Moroccan education system.

Attachment 2 includes guiding questions, not all of which need to be answered in respondents' feedback. Incorporation of any feedback is subject to internal USAID discussions and approval. Respondents will not be invited to elaborate upon them after submission.

This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes; it does NOT constitute a solicitation and in no way obligates the US Government to issue a Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and/or award or pay for any information submitted as a result of this request. If a NOFO is issued, all necessary information will be supplied at the time it is posted at <https://grants.gov>. Questions/requests for information will not be responded to until NOFO issuance.

Interested parties are advised to periodically monitor the above website for updates concerning this procurement.

Submissions must: utilize the response template (Attachment 3), be in English, be in a Microsoft Word or a searchable Adobe pdf format, and should not be longer than six typed pages using the following formatting requirements: single-spaced, Times New Roman font (or similar size typeset), size 11, 1-inch margins, pages numbered consecutively in the bottom margin. Although we will accept up to six pages of text, USAID values concise, issue-specific comments. Any additional information appended to the submitter's response, such as a report or infographic, will only be reviewed by USAID/Morocco if it is included in the body of the response as an embedded link. Please also provide your name, title, organization, and contact information in your response.

Individual responses to this RFI will be held confidential. However, respondents must refrain from sending proprietary information or other protected information in response to this RFI. Please **do not** submit applications or resumes as they will be discarded.

USAID/Morocco reserves the right, but is not obligated to, incorporate any, some, or none of the comments received into any subsequent Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). **Responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to any organization in any subsequent procurement.**

Responses to this RFI must be submitted by email only to Salya Yacoubi at syacoubi@usaid.gov and usaidmoroccocontracts@usaid.gov no later than **June 23, 2021 by 12pm (noon), Rabat, Morocco time**. The email subject line and file name should be as follows: "Responses to Morocco RFI: Bridge to Middle School". Responses received after this deadline will not be read or considered. Submission by email is required; phone calls or hard copy delivery will not be accepted. You may receive an electronic confirmation acknowledging receipt of your response.

USAID/Morocco values input from our potential partners, and we thank you for your interest and assistance in developing potential future programs.

Sincerely,

Zachary Clarke
Regional Agreement Officer
USAID/Morocco

List of attachments:

- Attachment 1: Bridge to Middle School RFI - Draft Theory of Change
- Attachment 2: Bridge to Middle School RFI - Guiding Questions
- Attachment 3: Bridge to Middle School RFI - Response Template

Attachment 1

Bridge to Middle School RFI - Draft Theory of Change

I. Background and Information

USAID/Morocco is engaged in the early stages of a reflection process about both the challenges in, and the opportunities for, improving students' ability to master key skills in the upper primary and middle school ("junior secondary") grades.

USAID's current considerations involve: a) the ability of teachers to teach critical thinking, and students to master, literacy skills, math skills, and science skills in the upper primary grades, b) the ability of the Moroccan education system to provide high-quality literacy instruction in English and Arabic in the middle school years, and c) the ability of the Moroccan education system to provide high-quality STEM (science, technology, and math) instruction in the middle school years. USAID is currently considering the below theory of change as a framing device for the design of the eventual Bridge program.

Figure 1: "Bridge to Middle School" Draft Theory of Change

Goal: The Moroccan system employs evidence-based pedagogies promoting critical thinking to ensure upper primary and middle school students improve their learning outcomes in Arabic, English, and STEM.		
<i>IR1. Ability of the Moroccan education system to improve learning outcomes in target upper primary school subject areas demonstrated</i>	<i>IR2. Ability of the Moroccan education system to improve learning outcomes in target middle school subject areas demonstrated</i>	<i>IR3. Ability of the Moroccan education system to prepare for scaling up successful practices increased.</i>
Sub-IR 1.1. Models to address system gaps in delivering high-quality instruction in reading (Arabic) piloted	Sub-IR 2.1. Models to address system gaps in delivering high-quality instruction in reading (Arabic and English) piloted	Sub-IR 3.1. Effective policies for improved efficacy and equity of the education system in upper primary and middle school developed
Sub-IR 1.2. Models to address system gaps in delivering high-quality instruction in STEM math and science piloted	Sub-IR 2.2. Models to address system gaps in delivering high-quality instruction in science, math and technology (STEM) piloted	Sub-IR 3.2. Capacity of system actors to implement improved policies and curricula increased
Sub-IR 1.3 Assessment systems in upper primary school strengthened	Sub-IR 2.3 Assessment systems in middle school strengthened	Sub-IR 3.3. Distance learning strategies for supplementing instruction in target primary and middle school subjects developed
Transversal Considerations: <i>Drop-out reduction, gender equity, progressive development of student autonomy in studying and learning, the integration of technology into subject matter instruction, and the inclusion of learners with disabilities.</i> Post-Covid Considerations: <i>How to improve/innovate instructional delivery in the target regions in the post-Covid context (i.e. accelerated learning, distance learning, assessments, etc.)</i>		
Research and Learning Agenda: Implementability of the new models at scale; sustainability barriers; improving the use of assessment data in classroom instruction; models of teacher support via distance learning modalities; strategies for improving retention in upper primary and middle school in rural areas.		

[End of Attachment 1]

Attachment 2

Guiding Questions for Bridge to Middle School RFI

1. Please state your organizational affiliation, and your connections with the education sector in the Kingdom of Morocco. If your organization currently works in the education sector in Morocco, please describe in which regions, provincial directorates, grade levels, and subjects.
2. Please state whether you are interested in this funding opportunity (NOFO) when released or partnering with another organization to participate? Please explain your experience on this topic.
3. Based on your experiences in Morocco (or those of your organization) regarding the draft theory of change above:
 - a. Is the logic that links the potential intermediate results in upper primary school and in middle school to the top-level result clear? If not, what could provide additional clarification? What modifications would you recommend to better “connect” the intended work in upper primary school and the intended work in middle school to the topline result?
 - b. What realities related to teacher professional development should be incorporated into the program's design?
 - c. What would a reasonable budget ceiling be for piloting in the target subject areas in approximately 30 upper primary schools and approximately 60 middle schools?
4. Based on your experiences, or those of your organization, in Morocco:
 - a. What strategies in systems strengthening and capacity building in the education sector in Morocco have **succeeded in** improving the efficiency and efficacy of: a) central government directorates, b) regional academies, c) provincial education directorates, d) school administrations, and f) other institutions responsible for the delivery of upper primary or middle school educational services that produce results? For any strategy you describe as successful, please describe **why** it was/is successful. Please also describe what metrics have demonstrated its success.
 - b. Have you or your organization ever worked to scale up an educational reform in Morocco from a small number of schools to a considerably larger number? What lessons learned would you recommend that USAID consider when contemplating an effort to facilitate Morocco’s scaling up of new upper primary school or middle school reforms?

- c. What role, if any, could Moroccan businesses and private sector actors in major industries play in systems strengthening or capacity building in the education system in Morocco? Please be as specific as you can.
- d. Do you have any other information about systems strengthening and capacity building in education in Morocco, or about the education system in Morocco in general, that you believe is important for USAID/Morocco to understand? Please explain.

[End of Attachment 2]

Attachment 3

Response Template for Bridge to Middle School RFI

Authorized Point of Contact (POC) Name:

Title:

Organization:

Email:

Respondents are encouraged to review the questions and submit responses **only** to the questions they feel most qualified to answer. Respondents do not need to respond to all the questions.

USAID/Morocco is also interested in any other program recommendations, relevant context, existing capacities, or other information relevant to the design of this program.

For any question to which an answer is submitted, the question must be identified by its question number. Please use the format below for responses to this RFI.

Question 1:

Question 2:

Question 3:

Question 4:

No other documents or information are requested at this time. USAID/Morocco asks respondents to not send any additional information other than what is requested above and to adhere to the page limits mentioned on the cover page.

[End of Attachment 3]