



Global Affairs
Canada

Affaires mondiales
Canada



Research Study Terms of Reference

Equality for Girls' Access to Learning Democratic Republic of Congo 2020 - 2023

1. Background

A vicious cycle of poverty, conflict and weak institutions has defined fragility throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where conflict has had a negative impact on all social infrastructure, including education systems. Girls, adolescents, vulnerable children and young women in the DRC face multiple gender-based barriers restricting their safe access to quality education; a sector threatened by conflict, inadequate government management of education institutions, limited investments in service provision and the destabilization of school structures and calendars. Conflict has had a devastating impact on girls' education, negatively impacting their capacity to learn by exposing them to psychosocial trauma, loss of family members, displacement, exposure to sexual and labour exploitation and recruitment by armed groups. According to UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring report (June 2015), girls are two and half times more likely than boys to be out of school in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, and young women are nearly 90% more likely to be out of secondary school than their counterparts in countries not affected by conflict.

As a child rights-focused organization, WV recognizes the transformative power of education in enhancing values and practices that respect and promote human rights, social inclusion, gender equality and peace through targeted and strategic investment in girls' education, the elimination of gender inequalities and the strengthening of local institutions.

In the DRC, multiple and mutually reinforcing fragilities exist in conflict-affected parts of Kasai, resulting in internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and children involved in armed conflict. In response to this fragile and conflict-affected context, WV, in partnership with Make Music Matter (MMM) and local, provincial and national Education, Gender and Social Service Ministries, is implementing EGAL: Equality for Girls' Access to Learning in DRC, working in Kasai central province, between 2020 to 2023 to enhance the agency of girls, increase their resilience in fragile contexts, and improve their power for independent decision-making.

This will be accomplished by reducing the barriers that prevent girls from accessing quality education and investing in coordinated, quality, gender-responsive and conflict-sensitive education systems through:

1. Increased equitable access to quality, inclusive, safe, gender-responsive education and learning for vulnerable children and youth, particularly girls, in primary and secondary education levels
2. Improved provision by national, provincial, local authorities of quality, inclusive, safe, gender-responsive education and learning services for vulnerable children and youth, particularly girls

The project aims to reach 600,000 people directly through project activities, including 192,000 girls, 186,000 boys, 114,000 women, 108,000 men and 70,000 persons living with disabilities with the goal of improving agency and access to quality education. EGAL also seeks to reach 8,000 girls below the age of

18 who are survivors of SGBV. EGAL will use radio and community campaigns to reach hundreds of thousands of women, girls, boys and men throughout Dibaya and Kananga in Kasai Central.

School-based programming at both the primary and secondary levels will reach 6,549 girls and 4,899 boys. Approximately, 274 teachers and 8 ALP facilitators will be involved directly through training and school management activities in 20 elementary schools, 2 all girl secondary schools and 2 Accelerated Learning Programs centres. Additionally, 2,520 girls, 484 boys, at least 100 female caregivers are expected to benefit from Make Music Matter's psycho-social Healing in Harmony program. In order to foster transformational attitudinal change and action on girls' education the project will work through 110 diverse, multi-faith leaders (25 women and 85 men). Make Music Matter will host 15 concerts with approximately 500 participants each and millions of radio/online streaming listeners worldwide benefiting indirectly.

EGAL will sensitize the wider community, including faith and community leaders, parents, school leadership, men and boys, using Unlocking Literacy (UL), Channels of Hope, Gender and MenCare approaches, and support girls to claim their right to quality, safe and gender-responsive education.

Healing in Harmony as a part of EGAL:

A key component of the EGAL project is going to be a partnership with Make Music Matter to address psychosocial trauma as a barrier to learning for (in and out of school) vulnerable girls and young women between the ages of 8-18 years who are survivors of trauma and SGBV. Any participant of school age is eligible for the program, however HiH program will start engaging students who are in 3rd through 6th grade primary and secondary students who will be interested in the program. In addition, school students who are over 18 years old are eligible to join the program. For secondary school students over 18 years old, they will sign the consent form themselves and for primary and secondary school students between 8 and 17 years old we will have parental permission or guardians who are ready to sign the parental consent form.

MMM's unique brand of music therapy, the HiH program, positions music as an integral part of a community-driven, holistic healing model addressing MHPSS and works with professional psychologists, selecting participants based on tested levels of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), with girls and young women most in need given preference. 2,520 girls, 484 boys, at least 100 female caregivers are expected to benefit from Make Music Matter's psycho-social Healing in Harmony program

Previous ICART research conducted with the support of the Humanitarian Innovation Fund showed that participants in the MMM program are twice as likely to demonstrate an improvement in their anxiety scores and 80% more likely to overcome their PTSD.

2. Study Objectives

As part of the EGAL project, there is also a focus on a research agenda that aims to establish an evidence base about barriers and enablers to education for girls in conflict, and activities advocating for changes that will improve the lives of girls and women.

WV Canada is interested in partnering with an academic institution to understand the impact of EGAL interventions on girls' access to education, school retention and their learning outcomes, in conflict contexts. Based on findings from the study, EGAL will recommend policy and program solutions that mitigate barriers to and strengthen enablers of girls' education.

In particular the study will test the impact of the HiH program on the learning outcomes of the participants.

3. Objectives of the Research

World Vision is keen to make use of the research study to gain an understanding of:

1. The impact of the EGAL project interventions on the school enrolment, attendance, retention and performance of girls and boys affected by past conflict in Kasai Central, DRC.
2. The impact of Healing in Harmony related interventions compared to other EGAL interventions, on school enrolment, attendance, retention and performance of girls affected by Sexual and/or Gender Based Violence as a result of conflict in Kasai Central, DRC.
3. The impact of Healing in Harmony related interventions on the mental health and psychosocial outcomes for girls affected by Sexual and/or Gender Based Violence in Kasai Central, DRC.
4. The impact of other World Vision interventions, applied in the EGAL project, including Men Care and Channels of Hope on education, mental health and psychosocial outcomes for girls affected by Sexual and/or Gender Based violence as a result of conflict in Kasai Central, DRC.
5. Key factors that most contributed to girls' school enrolment, attendance, retention, and performance.

The subject population for the study is in and out of school children between the ages of 8-18 in the communities of Kasai Central. Sub sections of the population identified as vulnerable, particularly girls, (including girls with disabilities and girls that have suffered sexual and or gender based violence) include:

1. Displaced children and youth;
2. Returnees;

3. Host community children and youth who have dropped out of school;
4. Children and youth formerly associated with armed groups;
5. Separated or unaccompanied children including orphans;
6. Children who have been engaged in forced and dangerous labor;
7. Children who have lived on the streets, and;
8. Pregnant young girls

The proposed Research Question for the Study is:

What is the impact of: a) education-supportive interventions (including school scholarships, school kits, gender-responsive WASH facilities, Healing in Harmony, Men Care, Channels of Hope, Unlock Literacy, and teacher training on gender and conflict-sensitive education) on school enrolment, retention and learning outcomes for girls, (in particular girls exposed to sexual and or gender based violence) between the ages of 8-18 and boys in Kasai; and b) Healing in Harmony program on girls, (ages 8-18) who have been exposed to or who have experienced trauma associated with Sexual and Gender-based Violence and have dropped out of school and returned compared to girls who have been exposed to trauma and not participated in the program and have:

- i) not participated in any of the other EGAL interventions,
- ii) have participated in other EGAL interventions but not Healing in Harmony?

4. Methodology:

It is proposed that the research study adopt a stepped wedge methodology, with both quantitative and qualitative data collected at the baseline, i.e. before the start of any intervention.

Following that, data will be collected on sample populations at the end of every year, in order to measure school enrolment, attendance, retention, learning outcomes and psychosocial and mental health outcomes for cohorts participating in or benefitting from Healing in Harmony, Men Care, Unlocking Literacy, Channels of Hope and all other EGAL interventions compared to control groups.

An end line evaluation will be conducted to measure impact of all EGAL interventions on education and psycho-social and mental health outcomes for the sample populations.

Independent of this consultancy, baseline and end line surveys will be conducted by the project team to measure project performance indicators.

4.1 Key Activities and Deliverables:

1. Review:

A review of all relevant documents, studies and other data sources regarding access to education, school retention and completion as well as quality of education, particularly around issues of mental health and psychosocial outcomes. A focus on programming in conflict affected populations, particularly within DRC should be included. Included among these will be project design documents, the Baseline Study and Gender Equality Assessment (respectively) for conducted in October 2020 for the EGAL Program; EGAL Annual Work Plan

2. Communication:

Communicate with WV Canada and WV DRC and GAC to confirm relevant information, programming and priorities for the research study. WV Canada will assist in arranging meetings and communication methods, as per agreed upon communication protocols.

3. Inception Report:

- i. Including a literature review of education and psychosocial and mental health related interventions and their impact on girls and boys, between the ages of 8-18 years.
- ii. Review of all documentation provided by World Vision on the following:
 - a. Healing in Harmony
 - b. Men Care
 - c. Unlocking Literacy,
 - d. Channels of Hope
 - e. All other EGAL Interventions
- iii. Overall conceptual framework, methodology and data analysis framework (including gender analysis) for the research.
- iv. Detailed data collection tools and protocols which will be piloted and finalized prior to full implementation
- v. Detailed work plan that includes all tasks to be carried out by the academic partner, sample sizes, site location selection and detailed dates incorporating the overall study timeline.
- vi. Guidance on ethical considerations and safeguarding recommendations, as part of the research protocol, and as required for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval at global and country levels
- vii. Composition of the Research Team and estimated Level of effort of each team member
- viii. Risk and mitigation strategy for each part of the study
- ix. Outline of the product to be submitted and details on processes for publication.

4. Finalization of data collection tools to ensure accurate, consistent data collection, and provide a data collection and management protocol.
5. Hiring and training of enumerators for data collection in the field.
6. Ensuring the quality of data collected.
7. Baseline Report: including survey tools, quantitative and qualitative data sets and analysis of data collected.
8. Year 1 end Report: including survey tools, quantitative and qualitative data sets and analysis of data collected.
9. Year 2 end Report: including survey tools, quantitative and qualitative data sets and analysis of data collected.
10. Final Research Report: Submit draft and final Reports ready for peer reviewed publication, including an executive summary and full consolidated report with individual country results annexed. These should be geared towards Peer Reviewed journal articles contributing to the knowledge base on:
11. Copies of original and cleaned data including any field notes, as well as annexes of results tables (with all levels of disaggregation) are to be submitted to the WV Canada with the draft report

4.2 Timelines¹:

The period of the contract will be from February 2021 to April 2023, with an expected contribution of approximately 180 working days.

¹ The timeline is subject to change.

Task/Output	Estimated Due Date	Expected LOE
Letter of Interest with any specific questions	January 8, 2021	
Submission of Research Proposal	January 22, 2021	
Award of Contract	February 5, 2021	
Initial Meetings with WV Canada and WV DRC	The week of February 8, 2021	20
Review of Documents	The week of February 15, 2021	
Draft Inception Report	February 22, 2021	
Final Inception Report including tools and timelines	March 1, 2021	
Research Approvals	March 2 – 12, 2021	20
Hiring and training of Field Researchers/enumerators	March 2 – 26, 2021	
Piloting of research Tools	April 1 – April 12, 2021	10
Year 1 Data collection	May 2021 – January 2022	30
Draft Year 1 End Report	February 2022	30
Final Year 1 End Report incorporating WV Feedback	March 2022	
Year 2 Data collection	March 2022 – January 2023	30
Hiring and training of Field Researchers/enumerators	January – 2023	30
Draft Year 2 End Report	February 2023	
Final Year 2 End Report incorporating WV Feedback	March 2023	
Submit final reports and abstracts for publication, with feedback from WV.	April 2023	10
Total LOE		180

4.3 Qualifications of Research Partner:

1. Team Lead and team of Principal Investigators should be PhDs from a recognized university currently employed by an academic institution with expertise in research on access to education for girls, particularly the impact of displacement and conflict and resulting mental health and psychosocial outcomes on education.

2. Demonstrated experience in conducting gender analysis and gender-focused research on access to education in developing countries is required.
3. Demonstrated experience in integrating gender equality considerations across the research design, methodology, analysis and recommendations is required.
4. A minimum of 7-10 years of experience in designing and administering studies, collecting data and producing qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research reports, preferably for international non-profit organizations or multilateral agencies,
5. Demonstrated experience in step wedge research study design, including overall approach and methodological rigor, developing tools, developing data quality protocols and training facilitators and/or enumerators
6. Demonstrated experience in quantitative and qualitative data analysis.
7. Demonstrated experience in conducting research studies in Africa is mandatory. Experience in research in DRC is preferred.
8. Fluency in French within the research team is required.
9. Ability to travel to DRC for conducting field research by following the DRC's Covid-19 guideline and precautions.
10. Readiness to commit to the two-year time frame for the research study.

4.4 Application Packages and Procedures

1. Letter of interest in submission of a proposal (in the form of an email) to Melanie Gillespie – _Melanie_Gillespie@worldvision.ca. Please share this by end of business day (EST), January 8, 2021, along with any specific questions related to the assignment. Responses to these questions will be shared with all bidders via email by January 13, 2021.
2. Detailed technical proposal of maximum 8-10 pages clearly demonstrating a thorough understanding of this ToR and including the following:
 - Description of methodologies for the research and proposed conceptual framework for the research.
 - Demonstrated previous experience in mixed methods and other qualifications outlined in this ToR, including with regards to gender analysis and the integration of gender equality considerations across the design, methodology, analysis and recommendations of the research
 - A proposed/revised timeframe detailing activities and a schedule/work plan (including a Gantt chart) meeting the above-mentioned timeline criteria as well as comments on the proposed LOE
 - Team composition, complete CVs and level of effort and job responsibilities of each proposed team member, specifying team members language skills, particularly in French
 - In case of a joint submission by two organizations or individuals representing two organizations, a Teaming Agreement should be included with the proposal

In addition to the technical proposal as outlined above, the proposal should also include the following:

- Curriculum Vitae(s) of all proposed staff outlining relevant experience
- Names and contact information of three references who can be contacted regarding relevant experience
- A copy of one previous report of similar work undertaken on: step wedge method study with a focus on the impact of programming, particularly mental health and psychosocial related interventions on education outcomes for girls.
- A University Research Unit profile.

3. A financial proposal with a detailed breakdown of costs for the study not to exceed CAD \$200,000, including:

- Itemized consultancy fees/costs
- Estimated field mission expenses for field visit (to be reimbursed based on Financial protocols of World Vision Canada)
- Itemized administrative expenses
- Validity period of quotations

The proposal will be scored on both technical (methodology) and financial (budget) aspects weighted at 70% and 30% respectively.

Closing date for submission of the application package is end of business day (EST) on January 22, 2021.

4.5 Ethics Approval and Disclosure of Information

Full ethical approval will be obtained before the study commences, if required. In accordance with Research Policy and Standards, this will be obtained through:

1. In cases where the proposal is submitted by a University or research institution that has an ethics approval process, then that University or research institution may provide approval.
2. Ethics approval from governmental or other regulatory bodies, in DRC.

All ownership and copyright for final data collected is held by the WV Canada. It is understood and agreed that the Consultant(s) shall, during and after the effective period of the contract, treat as confidential and not divulge, unless authorized in writing by WV Canada, any information obtained in the course of the performance of the Contract. Information will be made available for the consultants on a need-to-know basis. Any and all necessary field visits will be facilitated by WV Canada and WV DRC staff.

4.6 Child Protection/Safeguarding

WV Canada is committed to actively safeguarding children from harm and ensuring children's rights to protection are fully realized. WV Canada takes seriously the commitment to promote child safe practices and protect children from harm, abuse, neglect and any form of exploitation as they come into contact with WV Canada supported interventions. In addition, we will take positive action to prevent child abusers from becoming involved with WV Canada in any way and take stringent measures against any WV Canada Staff and/or Associate who abuses a child. Decisions and actions in response to child protection concerns will be guided by the principle of the best interest of the child.

As such, the study must ensure appropriate, safe, non-discriminatory participation; stressing all children's views collected, a process of free and un-coerced consent and withdrawal; confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Environments and working methods should be adapted to children's capacities; time and resources should be made available to ensure that children are adequately prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute their views. Consultants are required to provide a statement within their proposal on how they will ensure ethics and child protection in the process of data collection and visits in line with WV Canada's child protection policy. This must also include consideration of any risks related to the study and how these will be mitigated.

5. Governance

The Global Consultant will be required to work closely with the WV Canada and WV DRC M&E focal points (to be identified at the beginning of the assignment), the WV Canada Education Advisor, the EGAL Program Manager and Music Matters.

The consultant will however be directly accountable to the EGAL Program Manager and will keep the EGAL Program Manager continually informed on the progress of the assignment through updates via email and skype conferences. Additional staff from Canadian offices, country offices, Music Matters, and/or GAC may participate in meetings to inform and advise the evaluation process, as appropriate.

A research advisory council, comprising WV Canada and WV DRC staff, Music Matters staff and outside peer reviewers will provide oversight and comments at key intervals, specifically during the presentation of the inception report, and submission of the draft and final year end and final research report.