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RFP-SOT-2025-001
Request for Proposals

Leading from the Middle: Leadership for Foundational Learning in Senegal

RFP Release Date: January 6, 2025
Question Submission Deadline: January 15, 2025
Question Response Posted Deadline: January 17, 2025
Proposal Submission Deadline: February 7, 2025 *(submission date extended)*

Name: Leading from the Middle: Leadership for Foundational Learning in Senegal
Geographic Source: Any country including the place of performance but excluding any country that is a prohibited source. Senegal-based firms are preferred.
Contract type: Deliverable-based fixed price contract

Approximate date contract issued to successful bidder(s): on/about Feb 10th, 2025

Contract Funding: The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Submit proposal to: FLN@rti.org, please include the solicitation number in the subject line

Solicitation Number: RFP-SOT-2025-001

This RFP in no way obligates RTI to make an award, nor does it commit RTI to pay any costs incurred by the Seller in the preparation and submission of a proposal or amendments to a proposal. Your proposal shall be considered valid for **90 days** after submission.

The RFP is organized as follows:

1. Background
2. Overview of Study Design
3. Scope of Work and Deliverables
4. Summary of RTI Responsibilities
5. Proposal and Submission Requirements
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1. Background

RTI International is an independent international non-profit organization dedicated to conducting innovative, multi-disciplinary research that improves the human condition. With a worldwide staff of more than 4,000 people, RTI offers innovative research and development and a full spectrum of multi-disciplinary services. Universities in North Carolina founded RTI in 1958 as a centerpiece of the Research Triangle Park.

With funding support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, RTI manages the Science of Teaching initiative—a 5-year program focused on improving foundational literacy and numeracy in sub-Saharan Africa. As part of this initiative, RTI is implementing a study titled *Strengthening the Role of Mid-Level Education Officials.* This study intends to build new evidence about how mid-level officials (district, sub-district education, and/or other government actors) within education systems align with and support what school leaders and staff need to do to improve foundational learning.

The focus of the study will be the mid-levels within education systems and their relationships and interactions with the other levels of the system to which they are subordinate and with the schools and teachers within their jurisdictions. The middle tier in Senegal consists mainly of the Inspections d'académie (IA) (regional level) and Inspections de l'éducation et de la formation (IEF) (sub-regional level) within the Ministry of Education Within this focus, the study will also examine how education actors at the sub-national level understand and use a new fidelity of implementation (Fidélité de Mise en Oeuvre (FMO)) tool to capture school-level practices and conditions related to the MOHEBS reform. Under the MOHEBS (Modèle Harmonisée de l'Enseignement Bilingue du Sénégal) policy, the Ministry of Education has been gradually expanding early-grade language and literacy instruction from three national languages to six, across thirteen regions. The USAID-supported RELIT program (Renforcement de la Lecture Initiale pour Tous) supports the government MOHEBS reform in 10 regions and is supporting the development of the FMO tool. This research is intended to serve as a public good, contributing to the emerging body of evidence on how education systems can support large-scale, substantive improvements in foundational learning. It builds on other BMGF-funded research under the Learning at Scale and Science of Teaching activities.

The provisional set of research questions to be addressed by the study include:

- **How does the middle tier support early-grade teaching and learning in Senegal?**
  - How does the IEF determine its priorities and direct its attention, efforts, and use of resources for instructional support?
  - What kind of data and information are collected by IAs and IEFs about schools, and how is it used?
  - What are the main activities the IEF undertakes at schools and with school staff? What is the frequency, focus, and nature of school visits (e.g., where does instruction support fit into the range of activities IEF undertake during school visits)?
  - What is the nature of the relationships between IEF and IA, in terms of communication, responsibilities, reporting, and accountability, impact the provision of instructional support?
- **How are the data and information collected by the FMO tool understood, analyzed, and used by middle-tier (IA, IEF) and school staff?**
  - How do schools and parents perceive the support provided by the middle tier, IEF inspectors, and the activities captured in the FMO tool?
  - How has the introduction of the FMO tool changed IA, IEF, and especially school inspector roles and daily work?
  - What enabling and constraining factors shape the middle tier's use of the FMO tool and the data it collects for school support?

- o Does the FMO tool lead to changes in how IEF determines priorities and directs attention, effort, and resources?

The study will include primary research using a case study approach and focus on one region (IA) and four IEFs (districts) within that region. The study will be led by a small team of researchers and a county-level data collection firm.

The proposal will be open to organizations from all geographic locations, with a strong preference for Senegalese-based organizations. *We are not seeking applications from international firms without a presence in Senegal that partner with a Senegalese-based firm to implement the work.*

Organizations should demonstrate the following preferred qualifications and experience:

1. Relevant direct experience collecting data in Senegal, ideally at multiple levels of the education system, including the school level.
2. Experience fielding qualitative and quantitative data collection.
3. Expertise in instrument coding and deployment in SurveyCTO or Tangerine.
4. Comprehensive understanding of research quality standards, with a specific focus on data quality assurance.
5. Ability to field data collection with fluent French-speaking teams.
6. Experience managing and cleaning quantitative datasets.
7. Strong processes for planning, budgeting, and change management.
8. Ideally, experience engaging with the district, school leadership, and teachers during data collection

RTI will lead the overall research process, including the research design, sampling strategy, and development of data collection instruments and analysis and reporting. RTI will also provide support for training development and implementation as well as piloting and adaptation of instruments. The Offeror will provide inputs into the final design including a review of instruments and sampling. The Offeror will be responsible for all activities related to survey coding and testing, and data collection including field planning, recruitment and training of data collectors, piloting and field-testing instruments, and supervision of data collection in compliance with best practice protocols. The Offeror will also ensure data quality assurance, and timely delivery/uploading of raw and cleaned data sets and field reports. Additionally, the data collection partner will assist RTI in securing the necessary data collection approvals at the national and local levels.

2. *Overview of Study Design*

There will be two waves of data collection activities in a total of 4 districts. The region and district selection will be finalized with the government, but Offerors should budget for four districts and eight schools within one region in the Central Zone (Fatick, Kaolack, Kaffrine, and Diourbel regions) for the purposes of their proposal.

The first data collection will consist of a rapid qualitative baseline conducted by the Offeror around February 2025 in four districts in the selected region. The data collection will mostly comprise short key informant interviews, with one focus group. This goal is to provide a richer understanding of overall middle-tier practices and contexts and facilitate comparisons to data collected in the second wave after the FMO tool is rolled out. The baseline findings will also inform the adaptation of data instruments for the main data collection.

Table 1. Baseline qualitative data collection (wave 1)

Respondent	Instrument	Sample	Est. Duration	Total Sample
Regional/IA level				
IA Director (Inspecteur)	Key Informant Interview (KII)	1	30 minutes	1
IA Head of Monitoring and Evaluation	KII	1	30 minutes	1
IA Senior Inspectors	KII	1	45 minutes	1
District/IEF level				
IEF Director (Inspecteur)	KII	1 per district x 4	30 minutes	4
IEF Head of Monitoring & Evaluation	KII	1 per district x 4	30 minutes	4
IEF Head of Inspectors	KII	1 per district x 4	30 minutes	4
IEF Inspectors (school-facing officers)	Focus Group	1 per district (4-6 inspectors) x 4	60 minutes	4
School level				
School Director	KII	2 per district x 4	30 minutes	8
Early Grade teachers	Focus Group	2 per district (3-4 participants) x 4	45 minutes	8

The second data collection is the main fieldwork. It includes surveys, key-informant interviews, focus groups, and a time-use tool for inspectors. The survey for IEF Inspectors and school Directors includes an adapted social network analysis tool that was developed for a similar study in Rwanda. The quantitative instruments used in this fieldwork will be piloted prior to this data collection (see Table 3, below).

Table 2 Region and district-based data collection provisional sample for main data collection (wave 2)

Respondent	Instrument	Sample	Est. Duration	Total Sample
Regional/IA level				
IA Director (Inspecteur)	Key Informant Interview (KII)	1	45 minutes	1
IA Head of Monitoring and Evaluation	Key Informant Interview (KII)	1	45 minutes	1
IA Senior Inspectors	Focus Group	1 per region x 2 participants	45 minutes	2
District (Département)				
Prefect or education representative	Key Informant Interview (KII)	1 per district X 4	45 minutes	4
IEF				
IEF Director (Inspecteur)	Key Informant Interview (KII)	1 per district x 4	45 minutes	4
IEF Head of Human Resources and Training	Short survey	1 per district x 4	20 minutes	4
	KII	1 per district x 4	45 minutes	4
IEF Head of Monitoring & Evaluation	KII	1 per district x 4	45 minutes	4
	Short survey	1 per district x 4	20 minutes	4
IEF Head of Inspectors	KII	1 per district x 4	45 minutes	4
	Short survey	1 per district x 4	20 minutes	4
IEF Inspectors (school-facing officers)	Survey (+ Social Network Analysis)	4-6 per district x 4	45 minutes	16 - 24
	Focus Group	1 per district (4-6 inspectors) x 4	60 minutes	4
	Observation/Coaching Records of FMO tool visit	4 per district x 4	60 minutes	16
	Time Capture Survey	4-6 per district x 4	60 minutes	16 - 24
Commune (Collectivité locale)				
Mayor or Education staff	KII	1 per district x 4-	60 minutes	4
School level				
School director	Survey (+Social Network Analysis)	2 per district x 4	60 minutes	8
	KII	2 per district x 4	45 minutes	8
	School records collection	2 per district x 4	30 minutes	8
Early-grade teacher	Short survey	4 per district x 4	30 minutes	16
	Focus group	2 per district x 4	60 minutes	8
School management	KII	2 per district x 4	30 minutes	8

committee (CGE) representative				

3. *Scope of Work Discussion:*

The Offeror will be responsible for all activities related to data collection including field planning, recruitment and training of data collectors, piloting and field-testing instruments, and supervision of data collection in compliance with RTI's protocols. The offeror will also ensure data quality assurance, and timely delivery/uploading of raw and cleaned data sets and field reports. Additionally, the Offeror, in coordination with the RELIT team, will assist RTI in securing the necessary data collection approvals at the national and local levels. More specifically, the Offeror shall execute the following activities for the study:

a. Provide feedback to RTI on instrument development
b. Translate surveys, key informant interview guides, and associated protocols from English to French
c. Prepare data collection plans and protocols
d. Code surveys and qualitative questions and protocols in SurveyCTO or Tangerine
e. Pilot quantitative instruments and revise programs as necessary
f. Provide all necessary tablets, data access, and printed materials to implement the training and data collection successfully
g. Recruit, train, and supervise enumerators
h. Support country-level ethics submission and approach and secure access to data collection sites (IA, IEF, primary schools, and local political offices) with support from RTI, RELIT, and the Ministry of Education
i. Field the data collection as outlined in the data collection plans (qualitative baseline and main mixed-methods data collection) and in accordance with agreed-upon timelines
j. Provide field reports and conduct troubleshooting during data collection
k. Provide daily uploads of data collected to RTI
l. Provide data cleaning and documentation
m. (Optional) Prepare descriptive summaries (memos), across roles, of selected questions in KIIs and focus groups, to support the qualitative analysis

With this RFP, we are asking for a detailed technical approach, staffing and work plan, and cost proposals, aligned with the specific activities and deliverables listed below. Section 5 provides explicit guidance on content for technical and cost proposals, as well as guidance on maximum length for each section.

Please reference Tables 1-3 above for detailed information on the sample and instrumentation and Section 8 for a high-level activity timeline.

Deliverables and Activities:

1. Consultations on the study design and planning

Deliverable 1.1: Virtual inception/planning meeting with RTI, and follow-up conversations as required
Deliverable 1.2: Development of Activity Timeline Chart
Deliverable 1.3: Development of initial field plan

2. Consultation on instrument development and translation of instruments
Deliverable 2.1: Review and written feedback on draft instruments developed by RTI with an eye toward:
   a. Validity in relation to research questions
   b. Mitigation of response biases
   c. Clarity of language and phrasing
   d. Relevant within the context
   e. Ethically acceptable
   f. Sequenced in a way that is logical and well-structured, with appropriate skip patterns, response options, etc. for the survey instrument
   g. The length of the survey, interview, and focus group instruments length is in line with the agreed time targets.

Deliverable 2.2: Instrument Review Meeting (virtual) with RTI.
Deliverable 2.3: Translation of final draft instruments and protocols from English into French and back translation of the same (note: tools should be programmed in both English and French).

3. Provision of tablets and data collection software.
Full Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) utilizing SurveyCTO or Tangerine will be used for all data collection activities, including quantitative and closed-ended instruments, and for storing and viewing the semi-structured protocols to be used for interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) all data collection activities. Offeror shall be responsible for providing appropriate Android tablets that support the data collection software for all enumerators and supervisory data collection staff.

Deliverable 3.1: Specifications submitted for the type of tablets and confirm the tablet hardware and operating system are compatible with the current version of SurveyCTO or Tangerine.
Deliverable 3.2: Provision of devices and associated materials (charging stations, memory cards, etc.) for CAPI survey implementation.

> **Please note:** RTI cannot use any equipment or services from specific companies, or their subsidiaries and affiliates, including Huawei Technologies Company, ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, and Dahua Technology Company ("Covered Technology"). In response to this request for proposal, please do not provide a quote that includes any Covered Technology. Any quote that includes Covered Technology will be deemed non-responsive.

4. Coding/programming, testing, and revisions of instruments and protocols

4.a Structured instruments (e.g., surveys, form capture) programmed into Survey CTO/Tangerine
The Offeror will be responsible for coding all surveys and other structured protocols and document capture forms into SurveyCTO or Tangerine. If necessary, the SurveyCTO/Tangerine license will be provided by RTI.

4.b Qualitative data collection protocols and loading into Survey CTO/Tangerine
For qualitative data collection, the Offeror will load the interview and FGD instruments (questions), together with the related instructions to data collectors and standard language for beginning and concluding interviews and FGDs, into Survey CTO/Tangerine for viewing/reference, along with fields for capturing other qualitative data such as found documents and media such as photographs, etc. Additionally, the Offeror will develop a) a system for recording and filing the audio for all interviews and FGD using the device, and b) all note-taking templates for capturing notes on paper during qualitative interviews and FGD (including for capturing the data collectors' relevant observations and reflections), and for post-data collection note expansion/memos covering reflections, insights, and flagging potential biases, and for initial extraction/coding of major themes in relation to the research questions. The Offeror will also establish a system for organizing and cataloging initial notes and expanded notes/memos either within Survey CTO or another platform. Data collectors should use audio recordings of the interviews and FGD to check the accuracy of their notes and their understanding of what was said.

Offerors are also requested to propose an option for the transcription of all interviews and FGD recordings, and for translation of these transcripts from French to English, with quality control for completeness and accuracy. [Note: the translation should be budgeted separately as this may not be included in the final scope]

4.c Preparation for quantitative data collection piloting.
   a. Before the training of enumerators or instrument piloting takes place, the Offeror will test the Survey CTO (or another platform) code of each structured instrument to confirm the programmed tools map to the documented instrument including response options, skip logic, and enumerator instructions. The Offeror will also check to see that all qualitative data collection and note-taking protocols filed in Survey CTO (or another platform) are accessible as planned. The Offeror will keep a log of all identified issues, consult with RTI on the same, and implement corrections. RTI will be allowed access to test the research instruments and participate in the process of ensuring the structured instruments are properly coded and all other protocols are fully accessible. The process described above will be repeated as necessary until a training-ready version of the survey instrument is obtained.
   b. Post-training and post-pilot fixes. As necessary, post-training and post-pilot adjustments will be made prior to the final deployment of the survey instrument in the field.
   c. Final sign-off. RTI will provide final approval of all coded instruments prior to the start of data collection.

Deliverable 4.1: Data capture programs shared with RTI for review

<u>Deliverable 4.2:</u> Data capture programs revised as necessary, finalized, and approved by RTI for piloting.

5. Piloting of quantitative instruments, and programming revisions as necessary.
The offeror, in consultation with RTI, will be responsible for implementing instrument pilots in a district not included in the study sample. The purpose of the pilot data collection is to test the reliability and validity of the quantitative (survey, social network analysis, and time use) tools and the comprehensiveness and soundness of associated protocols. A district not included in the study sample will be identified for the piloting.

The Offeror must identify strategies to pilot and adapt the quantitative instruments in accordance with the timeline indicated in Section 8 to enable data collection to begin no later than April 15th, 2025. An iterative process should be employed, whereby the data collectors are trained, instruments are piloted and revised, and then data collectors are retrained on the updated instrument prior to fielding the data collection.

The pilot should take place with the full range of survey respondents at the district and school levels (see details below). The Offeror will lead the pilot data analysis and immediately share it with RTI for analysis and review. RTI, in consultation with the Offeror, will make final decisions on instrument revisions.

Table 3 Pilot details

Respondent	Instrument/Protocol	Pilot Sample	Pilot Process
IEF Head of MEL	Survey	1	Split administration with cognitive lab/de-brief, update response options
IEF Head of HR & Training	Survey	1	Split administration with cognitive lab/de-brief, update response options
IEF Head of Inspectors	Survey	1	Split administration with cognitive lab/de-brief, update response options
IEF Inspectors (school-facing officers)	Survey	3	Split administration with cognitive lab/de-brief
	Social Network Analysis	3	
	Observation/coaching records data entry form	4	Collect records at the district, and check if the form aligned
	Time Capture Survey/Records Collection*	3	Orientation, capture and de-brief
School director	Survey	2	Split administration with cognitive lab/de-brief
	Social Network Analysis	2	
Early grade teacher	Survey	2	Split administration with cognitive lab/de-brief

<u>Deliverable 5.1</u>: Submission of a Pilot Data Collection Plan

Deliverable 5.2: Implementation of Pilot Data Collection
Deliverable 5.3: Submission of cleaned pilot data set, analysis of pilot data, and detailed fieldwork report with challenges and recommendations
Deliverable 5.4: Instrument Revision meeting with RTI, follow-up discussions as required
Deliverable 5.5: Revised data capture programs for all instruments finalized and approved by RTI.
Deliverable 5.6: Updated training and data collection materials
Deliverable 5.7: Additional training with updated materials and instructions based on revised instruments and protocols.

6. All printed materials necessary for enumerator training and data collection.
In addition to the provision of tablets for data collection, the Offeror will be expected to provide all other necessary printed materials to implement the training and data collection successfully. This may include materials such as training manuals, prompts, maps, data tracking sheets, etc.

Deliverable 6.1: Identify and prepare all printed materials needed for training and data collection.

7. Recruiting, training, and supervising enumerators.
The Offeror will provide suitable training facilities and all logistics necessary to support training and field tests for all data collection activities. The Offeror will recruit and competitively select a sufficient number of qualified field staff candidates to allow for trainees who will not successfully complete the training and for attrition during the training and field period. RTI staff will support the design and delivery of training emphasizing the data collection instruments, protocols, and strategies for reliable data collection. All data collection staff must have excellent French speaking and writing skills. The Offeror will be responsible for arranging the overall training agenda, in consultation with RTI, as well as all training on logistical issues and general fieldwork and enumeration training.

The training program should incorporate inter-rater reliability testing as appropriate and ensure an acceptable rate (as agreed between Offeror and RTI) is achieved before fieldwork commences.

Deliverable 7.1: Data collection team details with corresponding responsibilities and qualifications.
Deliverable 7.2: Training agenda and copies of proposed training materials submitted for review and approval by RTI, at least two weeks in advance of training
Deliverable 7.3: Enumerator, Supervisor, and Field Manager training completed
Deliverable 7.4: (for applicable surveys) Results of IRR scores shared and approved by RTI

8. Support for submission and attainment of country-level ethics approvals (as necessary) and securing access to data collection sites (IA and IEF offices; primary schools) with support from RTI, RELIT team and Ministry of Education
The Offeror will be responsible for contacting the IA office and IEF districts and schools and arranging access to district staff and school staff in advance of the data collection for the two rounds of

data collection.

To facilitate access to schools, in coordination with the RELIT team, the Offeror will also be responsible for contacting the appropriate district (IEF) education offices and securing permission letters from them. RTI will provide written permission letters from Senegalese Officials. The Offeror will be given copies of these letters of permission to support the more localized outreach.

Deliverable 8.1: Support for ethics approval submission.
Deliverable 8.2: Authorization to access sample districts and schools secured.
Deliverable 8.3: Data collection dates confirmed with district staff and schools.

9. Data collection planning and logistics
The Offeror will develop data collection plans that outline in detail all aspects of the fieldwork to be conducted by the Offeror. The plans will be developed with guidance from RTI and should include the following:

a. Final updated Activity Timeline Chart
b. Composition of Field Teams, including the ratios between enumerators, supervisors, and field managers, and descriptions of their roles
c. Allocation of field teams to districts/sectors/schools
d. Quality assurance processes

The data collection plan and planned level of resources/time should align with the following guidelines:

- Include sufficient field supervision for data collection teams.
- Include sufficient logistics, transportation, etc. to ensure an efficient and timely data collection.
- Use different, dedicated teams for quantitative data collection and for qualitative data collection (we are open to a combined team if the Offeror makes the case for this).
- For qualitative interviews and FGDs:
    – All interviews and FGD should be conducted by teams of two.
    – Each team member should review and expand their notes immediately following each interview/FGD to check for completeness and accuracy, using audio recording as necessary.
    – Paired teams should conduct a reconciliation process together after each KII or FDG, developing shared interpretations.
    – Teams should complete the initial coding of key themes and extract points in relation to the research questions.

Deliverable 9.1: Written data collection plan approved by RTI.

10. Data security and quality control plan

The Offeror should include a data security and quality control process in its technical approach. RTI reserves the right to conduct its own quality assurance processes during data collection. The Offeror's validation methodology shall be subject to RTI approval.

Deliverable 10.1: Submission and approval of data quality control plan, delineated by instrument, for RTI review. Data quality control plan should describe the approach for appropriate treatment of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and assignment of unique IDs for all respondents and describe an approach for daily secure data back-up.

11. Implementation of Data Collection
The Offeror will field both waves of data collection as outlined in the data collection plans and in accordance with agreed-upon timelines. This consists of the qualitative baseline (Table 1) and the main mixed methods data collection (Table 2). Staff schedules and school timetables will be utilized to schedule KIIs, FGDs, and surveys. At the school level, the School Director, Teacher and Parent Representative data collection and collection of school-based data (profile, planning and monitoring documents) will take place within the same visit to the school.

Deliverable 11.1: Data collection teams fielded and adequately supervised as per the agreed-upon schedule and sampling plan.

12. Data uploads and field reports

Deliverable 12.1: Tablet data and recording uploads should be completed daily and data extracts provided to RTI within 24 hours of request. RTI will review regularly the data for data quality review and to assess data collection progress.
Deliverable 12.2: Brief daily update on data collection activities and a verification that all tablet data has been successfully uploaded.
Deliverable 12.3: Weekly fieldwork reports describing any incidents and challenges confronted during the week of reporting.

13. Data cleaning and documentation

Deliverable 13.1: All final raw (clean) quantitative datasets, in Stata .dta format
Deliverable 13.2: Final codebook (quantitative) with all variables properly named and labeled
Deliverable 13.3: All final qualitative data, audio recordings, and other data capture
Deliverable 13.4: Complete report for all training, piloting, and data collection activities
Deliverable 13.5: Full transcriptions of all KII/FGD recordings with translations from French to English [Note: the translation should be budgeted separately as this may not be included in the final scope]

14. Qualitative analysis support [OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL DELIVERABLE]
If the offeror has the necessary experience and capacity to also provide qualitative analysis support, please include technical and financial details related to supporting the below activities within the offer. Offerors will not be penalized for not including this particular deliverable if the

offeror does not wish to bid on this element. Please clearly state within the technical offer if the offer intends to provide this optional support.

Deliverable 14.1: Prepare 8 descriptive summary memos of KII and FGD respondent responses, by role and by district, for selected protocol questions

4. *Summary Of Responsibilities Of RTI*

RTI will be responsible for the following:

1. Organize an inception meeting soon after the award of the contract and participate in the subsequent meetings (to be organized by the partner).
2. Provide all data collection tools (including consent language) in Excel format.
3. Provide technical direction and timely approvals for the workplan, including for the preparation, training, piloting and fieldwork phases.
4. Identify a list of the sample region, districts, schools, and respondents and support the Offeror in securing the required approval from the school and local government authorities.
5. Provide technical support regarding the objectives of the study, the focus of the data collection, and other details as part of the data collection preparation, training, and delivery.
6. Provide all other necessary documents and/or guidance to the Offeror to support the data collection and reporting process (e.g., relevant program documents, templates for deliverables, advice on data collection protocol, child protection policy, template for qualitative memo summaries, etc.)
7. Timely review and feedback on deliverables, and as relevant, approval of deliverables for Payment.
8. Content support for enumerator training.
9. Support in the field for the main stage of data collection.

5. *Proposal Preparation and Submission Requirements*

Proposals should be separated into two parts, a) Technical Proposal and b) Cost Proposal. Offerors are expected to examine the specifications, deliverables, and instructions in the RFP and address each in their proposal. See table 4 for further proposal instructions.

Table 4 Proposal Submission Requirements

Content	Content Details (*Maximum page length or range*)
Technical Proposal	
Organization Details (2 pages max.)	• Organization overview, including management structure. • Summary of incorporation/legal status.
Offeror's Understanding (1 page max.)	• Brief narrative outlining the Offeror's understanding of the proposed activities.

Relevant Experience (4 pages max.)	• Development of large-scale data collection plans and execution of the same. • Execution of research studies in Senegal • Recruitment and supervision of well-qualified enumerators. • Enumerator training design and delivery. • Pilot testing of instruments. • Programming instruments in SurveyCTO or Tangerine and fielding tablet-based data collection. • Qualitative research, including focus group discussions and interviews. • Securing access to education system actors and schools for data collection in a timely and appropriate manner. • Data management and cleaning. *Project Summaries for up to 3 of the most relevant assignments in the last 3 years should be included at the end of this section.*
Comments and Suggestions (1 page max.)	List of observations or suggestions (if any) on the RFP and scope of work.
Technical Approach and Workplan (6-8 pages)	Description of the Approach, Methodology & Workplan proposed by the Offeror for the successful execution of the activities listed in the RFP. More specifically, the Offeror's approach to: • collaborating with RTI on data collection planning and preparation. • fielding the data collection at the district and school level, while ensuring minimal disruption and maximum time and effort efficiencies. • strategies for the capture of qualitative data. • working with district staff, school administrators, and teachers. • recruiting and retaining sufficiently qualified data collectors. • piloting and revising instruments. • ensuring data quality, protection of data and PII, and compliance with relevant respondent protection protocols. • identifying, communicating, and addressing barriers during planning and implementation of data collection. • anticipated challenges for the above activities. Risk mitigation strategies for the above activities. *A week-wise Gantt Chart summarizing the project plan with deliverables should be included at the end of this section with specific consideration for the school schedule and other relevant timing issues.*
Project Staffing and Management Plan (2-3 pages)	• Identify the project staffing plan and structure, essential staffing, and the percentage of the time each will spend on this activity. • Offerors should describe the proposed team structure in this section.

	• Offerors should specify their proposed training and data collection staffing plan, including oversight/supervisory structures. • Offerors should include summary profiles of all candidates considered essential in this section. *Please include a resume (2 pages max.) for everyone considered essential for the successful implementation of this contract.*
Cost Proposal	
Budget Narrative	Narrative summary of the proposed budget including discussion and rationale for costing approach, major expenses, risks, and other considerations related to the budget.
Cost Proposal Details	The proposed budget and associated narrative will have sufficient detail to allow a detailed evaluation of the costs proposed, using the **Budget template in Appendix A**. Budgets should be submitted in the local currency of the bidding organization, with a conversion to **U.S. Dollars** for estimation purposes. RTI reserves the right to request any additional information to support the proposed budget. Please contact FLN@rti.org to request **Appendix A – Budget Template** in Excel format if unable to access it. Budget should be submitted in unlocked Excel format.

Following the selection of the apparently successful applicant, RTI reserves the right to request due diligence documentation, which is not limited to but may include:
   A. Audited balance sheets and profit and loss statements for the last two complete years. If audited financial statements are not available, please provide copies of the unaudited financial statements.
   B. Unaudited balance sheets and profit and loss statements for the current year-to-date.
   C. Copies of any audit reports/findings, if any
   D. Organizational chart
   E. Copies of Insurance coverage (i.e. worker's compensation, general liability insurance, automobile insurance, etc.)

6. References

Offerors should include three organizational client references and contact information. Ideally, at least one reference should be a firm with international operations. References should have worked with your organization within the past five years on projects relevant to the activities and geographic area of work and activities outlined in this RFP.

7. Evaluation and Award Process

The selection committee will evaluate the proposals based on their written technical and cost proposals. Each proposal will be evaluated first on the merits of the technical proposal. Those proposals

that reflect sufficient quality in technical approach, work plan, staffing and management plan, and organizational experience will advance to the cost proposal review. The award will be made to the Offeror representing the **best value** to the project and RTI. RTI intends to evaluate offers and award a contract without negotiations with Offerors. Therefore, the Offeror's initial offer should contain the Offeror's best terms from a price and technical standpoint. RTI reserves the right to conduct discussions if determined necessary by RTI.

8. *Proposed Timeline*

Table 5 Estimated contract timeline

Activity	Start	End
Selection – Contract Execution	Jan 25	Feb 7
Inception, Detailed Workplan, Design Feedback	Feb 10	Feb 21
Permissions for fieldwork, final sample, and baseline qualitative data collection protocols. Training for qualitative enumerators for baseline.	Feb 24	Feb 28
Qualitative baseline data collection	March 3	March 6
Qualitative data recordings and transcripts delivered	March 7	March 14
Instrument coding, translation, and testing completed, enumerator training plan, detailed field plan for pilot and data collection	March 7	March 28
Training completed, pilot implemented, and pilot data delivered, instruments and training updated based on pilot	April 1	April 15
Main stage data collection	April 16	April 30
Raw and cleaned quantitative data delivered, qualitative data and recordings delivered	May 1	May 9
[Possible summary memos, by role, for selected questions in KIIs/FGs]	May 9	May 23
[Possible translation of all KIIs/FGDs to English]	May 9	May 23
Field report delivered	May 12	May 16

9. *Deliverable And Payment Timeline*

Deliverables will be reviewed for quality and compliance with the requirements by RTI. Should a deliverable be found insufficient in terms of quality or completeness, RTI will provide written feedback and the opportunity to correct the deliverable by the Offeror within a reasonable timeframe. Table 7 below outlines the anticipated payment percentage and timeline for each deliverable, which will be finalized upon selection and award.

Table 6 Key deliverables, payments, and tentative timeline of the assignment

Deliverable	Description	Estimated Timeline	% of contract value

1	a. Inception report, which will include the following:
	
	    Organization's understanding of the project based on consultation with RTI
	
	    Detailed work plan with timing approved
	
	    Data quality assurance processes documented and approved
	
	b. Feedback on overall design, instruments and protocols completed
	
	c. Detailed recruitment plan approved
	
	d. Support for country-level approvals completed
		3 weeks after contract execution	20%

2	a. Instrument coding, translation, and testing completed b. Detailed enumerator training plan approved c. Final sample and data collection protocols approved d. Detailed field plan for baseline, pilot, and main data collection approved e. Qualitative enumerators trained f. Qualitative baseline data collection	Early March 2025	30%
3	a. Transcriptions of qualitative baseline b. Quantitative training completed c. Provision of tablets and other supplies for data collection d. Pilot implemented and pilot data delivered	March 2025	20%

4	a. Main data collection training completed b. Main data collection completed c. Field report delivered and approved d. Raw and cleaned quantitative data delivered e. Qualitative data recordings delivered, transcriptions	April 2025	20%
5	[Possible translation of all KIIs/FGDs] [Possible qualitative summary memos delivered]	16 weeks after contract execution.	10%