

## Terms of Reference for Digital Learning Services that aim to enhance refugee access to distance learning

Key Information at glance about the solution	
Title of the TORs:	Digital Learning Services that enhance Refugee Distance Learning
Duty Station:	System to be rolled out in governorates across Lebanon (TBC)
Contract Type:	Contract with Tech Firm
Duration:	Last quarter of 2021 with possibility of extension to 2022
Date	One Year Frame Agreement as of September 2021

### 0- Background Information and Rationale

The compounded political, economic, and health crises the country has been experiencing have revealed systemic challenges for all children in accessing quality education in Lebanon. Once the COVID-19 pandemic began, Lebanon, similar to other countries turned to technology as a possible solution. The pandemic presented additional challenges for refugee children who lack access to electronic devices, internet connectivity or electricity, an environment at home that is conducive for learning, or whose parents lack the literacy or capacity to understand distance learning requirements and support with homework.

UNHCR Education priorities remain to support the continuity of learning for refugee children, self-based learning and to prevent refugee drop out; strengthen parental engagement in the education of their children; and mainstream COVID prevention, mental health, and violence prevention in education programmes. In the current lockdown and COVID context, UNHCR in-person activities have been largely suspended since March 2020 and adapted to remote implementation modalities.

Homework support activities have been taking place remotely via messaging applications; facilitators prepare and share lessons with students messaging applications groups once to three times per week. They are available over the phone to answer the students' questions and clarifications. They regularly check the lessons shared by schools to identify the topics that are difficult for children to understand and send a detailed explanation. Messaging applications groups were formed for Parent Community Group members to discuss urgent educational matters and spread awareness on COVID-19. In-person Basic Literacy and Numeracy Classes have been largely suspended and classes have been taking place either remotely (via messaging applications) or via blended approach; students have been receiving voice notes and worksheets once or twice per week, and educators provide corrections and guidance. Educators collect feedback to assess the efficiency of the content delivery.

While messaging applications have been the dominant communication modality for refugee children to learn and communicate with their peers and educators, they were not designed to serve as digital learning solutions and therefore can become noisy, cluttered and unorganized, affecting the learning experience and outcomes for both learners and educators.

UNHCR is seeking durable solution to enhance the refugee digital learning experience via common messaging and contribute to quality learning in retention and Non formal education programmes targeting refugee children and youth.

## 1- Objectives

To enhance refugee digital learning experience, UNHCR is seeking to contract a supplier that delivers educational material over common messaging applications<sup>1</sup>. UNHCR is looking to sign a one-year frame agreement with a tech firm that provides interactive educational solutions linked to common messaging to facilitate access to education for refugee children and youth. The selected solution should address the main barriers hindering refugee access to distance learning like lack or limited access to, the internet, electronic devices, electricity, books/paper-based materials, technological literacy, and learning support from parents/caretakers. Moreover, the solution should enhance the learning experience of refugee children and teachers accessing distance learning.

UNHCR is seeking an easy-to-use, learner-centric, and organized platform which will allow educators and facilitators of UNHCR community-based activities to effectively track, analyse and organize the participants within the targeted activities.

The intended platforms aim at improving the communication channels between students and learners, thereby promoting, and enhancing the effectiveness of refugee online learning.

## 2- Scope of the requirement for service provision

The system should be linked to the existing educational retention and non-formal education activities via common messaging and should allow children enrolled in UNHCR remedial programmes (Homework support/retention) and Non-Formal Education (Basic Literacy and Numeracy) to:

1. Learn through different platforms (even if they access the same device in the same household) so they can learn at their own pace on the phone and won't interfere with each other.
2. Learn through voice notes to fully understand the questions and lessons (for those with no literacy skills) and in Arabic for those struggling with foreign language
3. Go through the course with minimal instructor interference with the help of the educational platform chatbot
4. Receive messages individually and can reply with text, emojis, images, videos, or voice notes
5. Interact with educators directly or through an automated chatbot that tracks learners in real-time

It would also allow educators/facilitators to:

1. Deliver courses entirely on common messaging
2. Manage students at scale with the ability to track, interact and collect insights on performance
3. Predefine messages and expected answers on the platform
4. Automatically calculates pre and post-assessment scores for students based on their messaging applications responses
5. Customize content of educational programmes by converting videos to links

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<sup>1</sup> Messaging applications (social messaging or chat applications) are applications and platforms that enable instant messaging. The messaging application will be defined based on UNHCR IT recommendations.

6. Register and follow up with children and monitor their learning outcomes in real-time
7. Interact with each student individually based on their response

### **3- Approach and Methodology**

UNHCR is seeking to commission a private tech firm specialized in education interventions, preferably one with previous working experience with educational institutions, UN sister agencies and familiar with the challenges refugee children are facing in the context of COVID and distance learning. The selected supplier should have prior direct working experience with teachers, instructors, and learners involved in online learning.

### **4- Anticipated duration of the contract**

The system is expected to be up and running by end of August 2021, roll out by beginning September 2021, and to be linked to the upcoming cycles of the non-formal education activities planned by partners in the last quarter. In the event of a Framework Agreement and depending on the budget for 2022 the system will continue to be used by UNHCR partners in 2022, with a possibility of replication and expansion to cover all field offices where UNHCR Operates (Beirut & Mount Lebanon, North, South and Nabatiyeh and Bekaa).

### **5- Deliverable and schedule**

The platform is expected to be accessible to refugee children and linked to current UNHCR education activities as of beginning September 2021. Refugee children and youth enrolled in Basic Literacy and Numeracy classes and retention programmes (including Homework support) as well as educators and facilitators of these activities will benefit from the system.

The selected supplier is also required to:

- a. Provide content support to partners and educators who will access the system. The supplier is expected to support the content transformation from books and teacher content into digital info including bite chunked information of images, videos, messages, or voice notes as relevant.
- b. Deliver training to UNHCR partners to enable them to transform the educational content into digital e-learning experiences and to support them to manage students and track their progress.
- c. Create a database of users (children benefiting from the software) and the management of the users shall be transferred to UNHCR and its current partners by beginning September 2021.

UNHCR will maintain control over the management of users and direct contact with beneficiaries however the selected supplier will be requested to support where needed.

The supplier will be liable for getting the necessary license agreement and all payments needed for the use of any third-party messaging platform as a base for its educational platform.

The system will be linked to an existing education programme that is currently implemented by UNHCR partner/s and targeting refugee children who are out of school, or in school at the risk of drop out. Such programmes include Basic Literacy, Youth Basic Literacy and Numeracy, Homework support activity and other retention programmes designed to support refugee

children to remain in school; Once the application is linked to the relevant activity, children benefiting from this programme will get the chance to access an interface that allows them to access content (videos, images, text messages, audio messages), real-time assessment tools and the option of human teacher interaction/intervention when necessary.

Educators of these classes will have the ability to create courses and assign content to children enrolled in the programme, equipped with analytics to track the students' progress.

## 6- Governance, Accountability and Verification of Services Rendered

The supplier is required to sign the UNHCR Code of Conduct, complete relevant online mandatory induction training, and respect UNHCR's Data Protection Policy, including confidentiality requirements. Data protection conditions with respect to the processing of personal data of persons of concern to UNHCR will also form part of the contract / frame agreement with the supplier.

In line with established standards for evaluation in the UN system, and the UN Ethical Guidelines for evaluations, evaluation in UNHCR is founded on the inter-connected principles of independence, impartiality, credibility, and utility, which in practice, call for: protecting sources and data; systematically seeking informed consent; respecting dignity and diversity; minimizing risk, harm, and burden upon those who are the subject of, or participating in the evaluation, while at the same time not compromising the integrity of the exercise.

UNHCR or its implementing partners will be assisting with the implementation and roll out of the system in the respective field offices in the 5 governorates across Lebanon Beirut and Mount Lebanon, North, Bekaa and South.

## 7- Payment Mechanism

The supplier is requested to provide costing based on licensing per user. The total cost will depend on the number of active users who will benefit from the system in each governorate, verified by UNHCR or its implementing partners.

Activity	2021 Target
BLN	2000 children
YBLN	200 children
HWS	2000 children

*The number of users stated here aim to enable bidders to have an indication of the projected requirements. It does not represent a commitment that UNHCR will have a minimum number of users. Number of users may vary and will depend on the actual requirements and funds available regulated by issuance of individual Purchase Orders against the Frame Agreement.*

Payment will follow the verification of the system and will be contingent to deliverables set in the "Deliverables and Schedule" section:

Deliverables	Verification
Digital Transformation	Digital link to be provided
Content Upload	Through access to App
Training on App Usage	Training agenda and material to be provided
Accounts creation and activation	System Administrator confirmation

Regular payments that are linked to deliverables will be transferred to the supplier based on payment terms agreed on with supplier.

## **8- Confidentiality**

All applications, interfaces, or source codes produced by the Contractor in connection with this contract shall be the property of UNHCR and shall be treated as confidential and shall be delivered only to duly authorized UNHCR officials on completion of the work or services under the contract. For confidentiality purposes, UNHCR may request to have the solution installed in-house or on a recommended cloud-based environment.

## **9- Security**

The solution must have advanced security features inbuilt so that the software has all the checks and balances to ensure the integrity of data and the software does not have any flaws or bugs which inadvertently or by design, permit the users to tamper, alter or modify any data without the appropriate permissions.

The software should provide the highest degree of security in the architecture. The Supplier must suggest a suitable security component required in software. In case of any failure, the Supplier shall be liable. The following are some of the security issues, but not limited to, which must be addressed:

- The system would ensure that the users follow login procedures.
- The access to the database should be based on the user roles of the organization.
- A proper system logging mechanism and audit trail must be built within the solution.
- SSL Certificate should be installed.

In addition to the above, the application must comply with the annexed UNHCR security requirements (Annex: Security Requirements for Application Projects).

## **10- Client Support**

The selected supplier shall liaise with UNHCR field offices regarding the planning, training, day-to-day implementation, and follow-up /monitoring of the activity.

The supplier will coordinate and support UNHCR Partners who will be responsible for:

- Follow-up on teachers/facilitators lesson plans and attendance
- Ensuring that the content is available, and lessons are conducted as planned
- Monitor on-going classes and fill teachers/facilitators evaluation forms
- Follow-up with teachers/facilitators on the students' attendance and absentees
- Fill in surveys/questionnaires related to implemented activities as applicable

## **11- Helpdesk and Ticket Tracking**

Each ticket submitted to the Contractor's dedicated helpdesk platform should be followed-up with a technical response within 36 hours or less based on the priority of the ticket. The Contractor must understand the importance of monitoring the status of each helpdesk ticket and follow-up on the specific actions taken based on the type of technical support required.

**Ticket Response Time.** Over the course of any day, the Helpdesk will scan for new tickets submitted. Consistent with our approach to reduce the helpdesk burden of responses, we will

make every effort to resolve the issue first with our current knowledge base before referring the issue to the appropriate technical level for assistance. We propose the following strategy for ticket prioritization and escalation.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Helpdesk Response Time</b>
<b>High Priority</b>	<b>Showstopper Defect.</b> A group of users or an individual user is unable to perform work due to a platform problem	Helpdesk will respond to a High Priority showstopper ticket within 12 hours, with a commitment to try to respond within 3 hours, depending on the time zone.
	<b>Defect.</b> A group of users or an individual user reports a defect.	Helpdesk will respond to a High Priority defect ticket within 24 hours to assess the issues and provide guidance.
<b>Medium Priority</b>	<b>Data and Training.</b> A group of users or an individual user requests assistance on data, hosting, training, mapping, configuration/setup, advocacy materials.	Helpdesk will respond to a Medium Priority ticket within 24 hours to assess the issues and provide guidance.
<b>Low Priority</b>	<b>Information and Enhancement Requests.</b> A group of users or an individual user has a question about how to do something which is a training issue. This also applies to requests for software enhancements.	Helpdesk will respond to a Low Priority ticket within 36 hours to provide guidance.

**Contact Details for Escalation of Helpdesk Tickets:**

Level 1 Technical (Please provide contact details)

Level 2 Manager (Please provide contact details)

Level 3 Executive (Please provide contact details)

**13- Reporting requirements and Evaluation criteria / Key performance indicators**

The selected company will be accountable for its deliverables to the UNHCR Education unit at Beirut Office (BO). Monitoring of the activity will take place by UNHCR and/or its implementing partners. The system should produce standard reports and interactive dashboards linked to learners' attendance, interaction, assessments, grades, surveys/questionnaires results, etc.

## Technical Offer Form: For the Provision of Digital Learning Services to Refugee Children

Company name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & Signature of Representative, \_\_\_\_\_  
Company Stamp: \_\_\_\_\_

Requirements			
<b>(i) Mandatory Documents</b>		Submitted:	
i	a)	Copy of registration documents with Government of Lebanon	YES/NO
	b)	Copy of audited financial statements for the last 2 years	YES/NO
	c)	Copy of registration Certificate with VAT	YES/NO
	d)	Certificate proofing that the firm has been in business for the last 3 years	YES/NO
<b>(ii) Other Required Documents</b>		Please fill:	
ii	a)	Is your company registered with UNHCR?	YES/NO
		If YES, indicate UNHCR supplier ID Number:	
		If NOT, please submit and confirm here whether the requested document are submitted with the technical offer:	Submitted:
		Duly filled in and signed Vendor Registration Form	YES/NO
		Document demonstrating ownership of bank account declared	YES/NO
		Copies of ISO and any other certificates	YES/NO
	b)	Please acknowledge here your acceptance of the UNHCR General Conditions of Contract for the Provision of Services (2018).	WE ACCEPT/ DO NOT ACCEPT
	c)	Please acknowledge here your acceptance of the UN Supplier Code of Conduct (2017).	WE ACCEPT/ DO NOT ACCEPT
	d)	Please acknowledge here your acceptance of the UNHCR Special data Protection Conditions	WE ACCEPT/ DO NOT ACCEPT
	e)	Please acknowledge here your acceptance of the UNHCR Security Requirements for Application Projects	WE ACCEPT/ DO NOT ACCEPT
<b>(iii) Description of the Company and Company qualifications</b>		Supporting document(s) (Please indicate which attachment/reference in your offer supports your compliance with this item)	
iii	a)	Company profile/background including year of establishment, experience and submission of ISO and any other certificates	
	b)	If a multi-location company, please specify the Headquarters and other Branches involved in delivering of the required services	
	c)	Structure of the company in Administration, Management, Technical structure and expertise	
	d)	Previous working experience with educational institutions, UN Agencies and familiarization with the COVID pandemic distance learning	
	e)	Provide letters of reference including Project details: -Name of project, year and duration, scope of the project, project timelines and reference/contact person details	
	f)	Any information that will facilitate our evaluation of your company's substantive reliability, financial and managerial capacity to provide the services	
<b>(iv) Terms of Reference (TOR)</b>		Supporting document(s) (Please indicate which attachment/reference in your offer supports your compliance with this item)	
iv	a)	Feasibility of linkage of the system to the existing educational retention and non-formal education activities via common messaging platforms	
	b)	Provision of content support to the partners and educators through the system	
	c)	Provision of training to the UNHCR partners for enhancing their capacity	
	d)	Creation of databases of users (Account creation and activation)	
	e)	Confirmation and obtaining of all necessary licenses and payment of fees for the third party messaging platform	
	f)	Capacity to rollout the system to all 5 governorates across Lebanon (Beirut and Mount Lebanon, North, Bekaa and South)	
	g)	Proposed approach for confidentiality of applications, interfaces or source codes including in-house or cloud based installations	
	h)	Proposed system security solutions as requested under point no. 9 of the TOR	
	i)	Proposed client support on day to day implementation, follow up and monitoring activities	
	j)	Proposed solution for Help desk and ticket tracking as requested under point no. 11 of the TOR	

	k)	Proposed system dashboard reporting functionalities for attendance, interaction, assessment, grades, surveys/questionnaire results etc.	
	<b>(v) Proposed personnel to carry out the assignment</b>		Supporting document(s) (Please indicate which attachment/reference in your offer supports your compliance with this item)
v	a)	<p>Details of the key personnel lead who will be working with the UNHCR on the assignment including the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of staff that will be assigned to this project and their availability</li> <li>• Title/Designation of the your team members on the project</li> <li>• CVs of Key personnel</li> <li>• Describe how staffing continuity will be ensured (mitigation of staff turnover).</li> </ul>	
vi	<b>(vi) Detailed project startup timeline and deliverables</b>		



**Annex C - Financial Offer Form RFQ/2021/027**

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Currency of offer: \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Item Description/Activity	Number of Users	Unit price per subscription	Total Price	Remarks
1	BLN - Basic literacy and numeracy skills targeting refugee children at primary age (10-14) who have limited or no prior learning, to transition them into formal education. This may include children who have been to school for a short period and dropped out due to poor learning outcomes achieved; therefore, have been out of learning for more than 3 years with no previous registration under Formal Education or other NFE programs. As per MEHE's endorsement, the BLN program has 3 levels (pending MEHE revised SOPs) and provides learning to targeted children in 3 subjects: Arabic language, Foreign language and Math. Programme also includes additional Life Skills and PSS activities and parental engagement sessions. Children enrolled in BLN will be referred to formal education ,ALP (pending MEHE revised SOPs) or Youth programs at the end of each round, depending on their age and readiness.	2000			
2	YBLN - Youth BLN - Programme targets youth 15-24 who missed three years of schooling or more and lack the most basic learning, functional basic numeracy and literacy skills. Certified Youth BLN includes 2 modules (1 for beginners and 1 advanced) as well as Life Skills module, PSS (psychological support), and SEL (social emotional learning that supports the children's entry into Accelerated Learning Programme, formal public education or formal vocational education. The YBLN curriculum is being revised by MEHE to include Parental Program and Community Engagement modules. Assessment, Reporting, Follow up and Completion requirements are in line with MEHE' Standard Operating Procedures SOPs.	200			
3	HWS and other retention support Activities: Retention Programmes target refugee children enrolled in public schools from grade 1 to grade 9 (basic education) who are at risk of dropping out due to their poor academic performance and achievement results. The program implemented in community venues (refugee houses/learning centers) focuses on creating a protective safe space for children to learn and receive individualized learning support in all the subjects that they need help with, especially the major subjects of the Lebanese curriculum (Arabic language, foreign language, mathematics, science), in order to support their transition to the next grade and retention in school. Homework Support Programmes also aim at enhancing the organizational and Life Skills for children to increase their self reliance and autonomy.	2000			
	Any other costs (please specify)				

**Notes:**

1. Please note that number of users have been stated in order to enable bidders to have an indication of the projected requirements. It does not represent a commitment that UNHCR will have a minimum number of users. Number of users may vary and will depend on the actual requirements and funds available regulated by issuance of individual Purchase Orders against the Frame Agreement.
2. Price must be provided without VAT.
3. Financial Offer must cover all the goods/services to be provided (price "all inclusive").
4. This offer is valid for 90 days from the deadline of submission.

Name and signature of Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Company seal/stamp: \_\_\_\_\_