

National Recovery Program Bureau

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR Individual Consultant

Needs Assessment for Special Needs/Inclusive Education

Background

Following the devastation caused by hurricanes Irma and Maria, the Government of Sint Maarten embarked on a large-scale recovery and reconstruction program, based on the principle of building back a more resilient Sint Maarten.

Since January 2018, the World Bank has been assisting the Government of Sint Maarten in the establishment of this program. A significant component of this program will be financed through a Trust Fund financed by the Netherlands, managed by the World Bank and implemented by the Sint Maarten Government.

The Government of Sint Maarten and the World Bank have prepared a consolidated National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) that prioritizes immediate, short-, medium- and long-term needs for the recovery, reconstruction and resilience of Sint Maarten. This Plan includes estimates of the financial requirements, costs and investments that are necessary to build Sint Maarten back better.

In parallel to the establishment of the Trust Fund and the execution of the NRRP, the Government of Sint Maarten developed an institutional structure for the implementation of Trust Fund financed projects. This structure is materialized in the National Recovery Program Bureau (NRPB) and serves as the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) for Trust Fund projects for which the Government of Sint Maarten enters into a Grant Agreement. As such, the NRPB represents the Government of Sint Maarten vis-a-vis the World Bank in the implementation of Trust Fund financed projects.

All NRPB activities relate to projects or preparations thereof, approved by the Trust Fund Steering Committee, which consists of representatives from Sint Maarten, The Netherlands and the World Bank.

In its capacity of PIU, NRPB works closely together with the line Ministries in the preparation, coordination, execution and evaluation of the Trust Fund projects. In addition, the NRPB will be responsible for all reporting and fiduciary responsibilities towards the World Bank.

Fostering Resilient Learning Project

The Trust Fund Steering Committee has allocated US\$ 30M to a project for the reconstruction of selected schools and the library. In addition, the project intends to improve operational aspects of the Ministry by designing and building a management information system. The project also provides a broader perspective of how the selected schools provide services to special needs students¹, based on today's principles of inclusive education and will (re)develop library & learning services within Sint Maarten's cultural heritage framework.

Special needs/Inclusive Education Framework

In 2017 Sister Marie Lawrence (SML) & Charles Leopold Bell (CLB) schools were damaged by Hurricane Irma, which was a huge loss as SML served in offering an inclusive educational program for children with Special Needs and the Charles Leopold Bell school offered a special program for students with behavior problems and special needs. These programs are a priority since Sint Maarten's Ministry of Education, Culture Youth and Sports (MECYS) endeavors to provide Inclusive education, in the least restrictive environment, for students with special needs and to strengthen the system's ability to structurally address youth behavior and psycho-social trauma which impede student learning.

At the time of the Hurricane Irma **Sister Marie Lawrence (SML) Primary School** welcomed 185 students, between the ages of 3 and 12, and 68 students in the after-school program attending this school or other public and subsidized school. Serving the community as a whole through a variety of learning, social and cultural programs, such as: (i) reading, (ii) tutoring, (iii) art activities for vulnerable youths to name a few. A special care program for students with special needs was created, in line with Sint Maarten's regulations for Primary Education to be inclusive. However, since post Irma and the vandalizing of the school the students, staff and the after-school program have been relocated to two other Catholic schools in other districts.

Charles Leopold Bell (CLB) is a public primary school located in Cole Bay. Before the hurricane, CLB had 165 students with 16 teachers, a care team, and management. Before the Hurricane, the Government approved a plan to include an Educational Care Center (ECC) for 50 to 75 public school students with chronic behavioral issues to place these students in a transitional special care program that addresses the individual needs through care and learning services within a controlled environment, that could not be facilitated by the regular school system. The ECC program was approved in 2016. The program was piloted on a small

¹ The applied definition used at Sint Maarten is as follows: ' Children with special educational needs are those that have characteristics that affect their ability to learn so that adapted teaching and learning conditions are necessary if they are to be fully and effectively educated. Students with special needs are typically students who fall into one or more of the internationally known classifications that include: • autism • deaf-blindness • hearing impaired • deaf • blindness • visually impaired • speech impaired • emotionally disturbed • specific learning disabled • mentally retarded • traumatic brain injury • orthopedically impaired • multiple disabled • other health impaired • Gifted* • Mensa level intelligence quotient

scale with public schools, and then to be expanded to all schools. The program was not implemented in the 2017-2018 school year because the building is currently unusable.

1. Objective

The objective of the assignment is to support government, specifically the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport (MECYS) in verifying and upgrading the delivery of special needs education within an inclusive education policy framework, which will improve the Ministry's capacity to support vulnerable students in particular and ensure access to education for all.

2. Key Duties and Responsibilities

- Identify and assess SML and CLB infrastructure and current learning programs and recommend update to access quality services to meet the needs of students with identified special needs.
- Identify and recommend update requirements and needs based on today's insights in terms of Innovation, Governance and Sustainability of both CBL and SML programs.
- Based on the assessment of available documentation made available by MECYS as well as the key stakeholders consultation, the consultant will prepare a Policy Framework.

1 Role of the Consultant

1. **Assessment of existing services and school governance mechanisms, inclusive of recommended actions for future service provision**

The consultant will identify current challenges/needs services for Special Education in St. Maarten, in addition to the schools mention above, where needed. Primary data will be made available from MECYS or other relevant sources.

The consultant will also review the current inclusive education programs that are being executed in funded schools, other programs that are organized by private institutions, as well as pre-hurricane and / or ongoing collaborations amongst schools offering special needs/inclusive education services.

The consultant will assess and recommend the most appropriate governance mechanisms to: a) Regulate the ownership and facility management of the new school facilities, and b) Facilitate necessary arrangements to allow all identified (by MECYS) special needs students, who are not otherwise serviced by other schools, priority enrollment in SML.

Part of the first steps will be for the consultant to complete a list of design criteria for educational facilities for special needs / inclusive education. These criteria will be used to update the already existing requirements/design criteria for both schools on accessibility, functionality, logistics, environment, safety and security, sustainability, and spatial development for CLB and (where needed) updated for SML. A stakeholder session will be organized to verify and conclude that the updated criteria reflect the Sint Maarten special needs/inclusive education framework and designs.

2. **Policy Framework.** Based on the assessment of available documentation made available by MECYS as well as the key stakeholders consultation, the consultant will prepare a Framework that will include:
 - I. Vision, relevance, future and sustainability of MECYS' and stakeholders' plans for public and private schools, based on special needs / inclusive education principles;
 - II. Services, needs (innovation);
 - III. Governance mechanisms (including staffing and financial management);
 - IV. Future collaboration between public and private schools offering special needs/inclusive learning services;
 - V. Organizational arrangements of the school facilities and programs.

A. Deliverables and Payment Schedule

The Consultant will be responsible for the following key deliverables:

Deliverables	Deadline	Payment
Delivery of plan of approach to NRPB	5 working days after signature of contract	10% at signature of contract
1. Assessment of current and future services and governance mechanisms		
Draft Assessment, send to NRPB, MECYS, SML and the World Bank, for comments and consultation	14 working days, after approval of the workplan by NRPB	25%
Final assessment sent and accepted by NRPB	3 working days after reception of consolidated comments from NRPB	20%
2. Policy Framework/Consensus document		
Draft report, send to NRPB, MECYS, SML and the World Bank, for comments	10 working days after submission of final assessment	20%
Final report sent and accepted by NRPB	3 working days after reception of consolidated comments from NRPB	25%

2 Qualifications

1. Education and Professional Experience

- i A masters' degree in Education, Social Sciences or Psychological Sciences, Change Management, or any relevant combination of Education Learning with at least 4 years of relevant experience in special needs and inclusive education. Or a bachelors' degree in the before mentioned specialization with at least 7 years of experience.
- ii Knowledge and/or experience with Special Needs/Inclusive learning concepts;
- iii Experience in institutional planning and financing, preferably related to education, or other learning services in the public and non-governmental sector.
- iv Experience with innovation in education and behavioral science is an advantage.
- v Experience with community engagement and consultation skills are an asset.

2. Additional Skills

- i Public-private partnership experience
- ii Innovations in educational learning services and the technological support;
- iii Ability to speak and write in English is a requirement, Dutch is an advantage;
- iv Project management certification would be an advantage but not a requirement.

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3 Reporting and Contract Duration

The consultant will report to the FRLP Project Manager, NRPB.

In addition, the consultant will work in close collaboration with MECYS, especially with:

- The Head of the Department of Education and Head of the Student Support Services Division and The MECYS Resilient Team;
- SML/SKOS/CLB/MECYS (department Public education) and key stakeholders;
- Regularly liaise with the FRLP Project Manager, other NRPB Officers, and the PJJ project manager and coordinator in the interest of effective planning and progress of the PPG activities;

The consultant will participate in consultations with stakeholders, including end users.

Since travel and congregation are currently restricted due to the COVID-19, the consultant will determine, with the Project Manager, the most efficient and effective manner to carry out this study.

The assignment is expected to take up to 4 months, and is contracted under a lump-sum arrangement (payment per deliverable).

3. How to Apply?

Interested consultants can send their CV in English by email ONLY to the email address stated below. Applicants should ensure that their application is received before 15th January 2021, 12h00 AST. Any application coming in after this date and time will not be considered.

In the subject line, clearly state the position you are applying for.

National Recovery Program Bureau

Thijn Laurensse

procurement@nrpbsxm.org

The application should clearly show the relevant experience and competences outlined in the terms of reference above.