



SECTION 1. DESCRIPTION OF THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC) was established in early 2013 to support the provision of basic education services for children considered to be underserved and/or marginalised. MEC's Phase 3 Programme Strategy spans 2021-2025, and places a continuing focus on strengthening complementary education, with the over-arching aim of supporting durable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning for children attending schools operated by ethnic and monastic complementary education systems. Across the Phase, MEC continues to work with selected education providers to strengthen their capacity to deliver and sustain good quality learning opportunities for children who are hard-to-teach.

It is widely recognised that monastic schools act as a source of access to education for children who struggle to access basic education particularly children who may be affected by poverty or conflict, providing options for children in poor and remote areas who may not have other viable alternatives to schooling. MEC has been supporting monastic education with a focus on support for the building of a monastic education system for the past five years.

Whilst MEC predominantly pursues a system strengthening model, it is recognised that the pathway toward long-lasting systemic change in monastic education may be a non-linear process. Given the complex governance structure, combined with the immediate needs to support children considered to be hard-to-reach to access quality learning opportunities, a Technical Assistance Partnership approach to supporting children's education within the monastic education sector has been deemed the most appropriate in the current context.

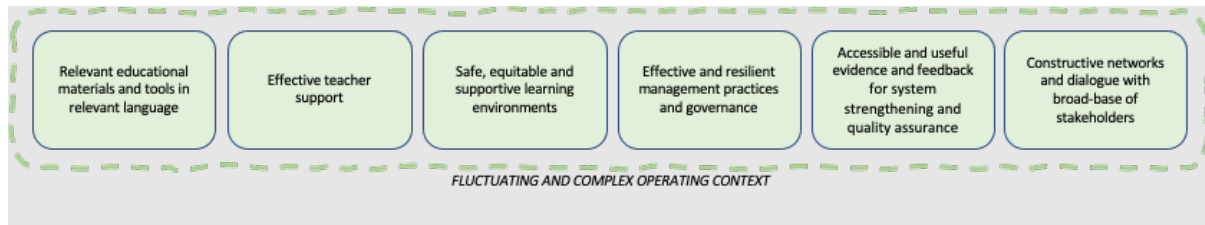
In line with this, MEC is inviting interested organisations to submit a proposal to support the Monastic Education sector to meet the learning needs of children in monastic schools. While not mandatory, there is a strong preference for a consortium of organisations to apply together to draw on the strengths of different groups, including experience in different areas of technical expertise and geographic areas.

A maximum of \$ 2,500,000 is available for the period March 2023 - May 2025 for intervention activities to be implemented over a period of two school years, with funding tranches reviewed and approved annually based on the achievement of pre-agreed milestone indicators.

SECTION 2. INTERVENTIONS AND TECHNICAL PRIORITIES

Overarching expectations

MEC invites interested partners to design and submit a funding proposal that responds to the most critical needs within the monastic education sector. These should be framed in the proposal in line with the interrelated domains of an education system as outlined in the MEC Theory of Change.



The proposal shall ensure that priority is given to the provision of support to children who struggle to access basic education by proposing innovations that cater to the immediate learning and well-being needs of students (including those who have historically been underrepresented in schools, such as those with disabilities, those from minority linguistic groups, etc). Applicants should provide clear descriptions of the target group and outline how they align to this expectation.

Proposals should also clearly articulate how the applicant will prepare, plan for, and respond to education delivery in the current context and future scenarios whereby schools may not be fully open. The applicant should describe how their proposal will directly impact children.

Requirements

Proposals must address all of the following priorities:

- Interventions reach children currently in school but also incorporate the creation/use of locally appropriate alternative learning modalities that respond to a situation in which traditional schooling may not be possible due to external factors.
- Teacher training initiatives that provide measurable improvements to the quality of children's learning. Training must clearly outline key areas of teacher competencies that support student's learning outcomes. Initiatives should be contextually based and realistically accessed by monastic teachers from a wide sub-set of experience, geographical locations and backgrounds. Provision of teacher training through in-person modalities should be prioritised.
- Illustrative activities that demonstrate the applicant's strategy to actively addresses cross cutting aspects such as safeguarding, gender equality, disability and social inclusion across programming, creating an education system that is safe, equitable and inclusive for all.
- Incorporation of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) approaches in student's learning and associated SEL frameworks to guide programme activities.
- The strengthening of monastic school capacity at school leadership, school management and administration levels, as well as support to non-technical education stakeholders such as state and regional monks, parents, and community members in order to create a more effective and resilient education system that can sustain outcomes in access and learning.

- The incorporation of a structured monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning plan that will support planning for learning and teaching improvements across monastic education. Technical support can be requested from MEC's Evidence & Information Management (EIM) team as needed for specific aspects of this plan.

For each of the above-mentioned priorities, the applicant needs to clearly outline the delivery approach. Any proposals that do not address the required areas of support or adequately outline the delivery approach will be rejected during the initial screening process

Desirable:

Applicants are encouraged to present an integrated approach that includes some or all of the following in addition to the above priorities in their proposals.

- Interventions that support the implementation of Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) programmes for those students for whom Myanmar is not their first language.
- Interventions that engage and network with other complementary education providers, particularly Ethnic Basic Education Providers (EBEPs) who are implementing MTB-MLE for the purpose of promoting sector-wide quality/equity in the monastic and other complementary education.
- Provision of support to the monastic education sector toward achieving ambitions set out in the Monastic Education Strategic Plan (MESP) and the associated implementation plan.

In addition to the provision of technical support to monastic teachers, MEC may consider allocating funding to a model of support for teachers as a means of motivating and retaining monastic schoolteachers. This may include contributing to teacher wellbeing support through, for example, the provision of teacher stipend support. This will only be considered if the application clearly outlines the need for this support and includes an appropriate model for provision, which would include policy and standard operation procedure development, record keeping, a monitoring and distribution plan and an appropriate risk management plan.

For all of the above interventions, the applicants are required:

- To outline the planned beneficiary reach numbers for each category of beneficiary and planned geographic area(s) of implementation.
- To demonstrate its approach to ensuring the relevancy of support & trainings to be provided to children, teachers, head monks and principals, etc.
- To demonstrate a comprehensive risk management plan, including how the applicant will manage risks associated with supporting monastic schools and teachers affiliated with different stakeholders and entities.
- To spell out clearly the form of targeted support to the different participants, delivery modalities of capacity strengthening support and trainings and how the delivery of trainings will be monitored and findings used to inform programme planning.

SECTION 3. FUNDING MODALITY

While an advance payment methodology will be applied, payments will be linked to results, and achievements will trigger the release of funds for the subsequent period following agreement on key indicators. Failure to meet pre-identified targets across the respective indicators will result in the withholding of the next tranche release, along with a weighted percentage of administrative costs.

Applicants are required to submit a matrix to guide the assessment of the achievement, detailing the indicator, the targets to be reached in relation to each tranche of funding release, as well as annually, and the evidence that will be provided to demonstrate the achievement (the monitoring mechanism). The matrix will be reviewed quarterly as part of the quarterly review process.

SECTION 4. ELIGIBILITY, GRANT SIZE AND PERIOD:

1. **Eligible project locations:** Any part of the country where children attending monastic schools are considered to be hard-to-reach (i.e. children who face barriers to learning, including (but not exclusively) barriers relating to language, ethnicity, remoteness, politics, income, conflict, gender and/or disability). Applicants shall present the rationale for targeting selected project locations.
2. **Funding:** Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the donors, MEC expects to provide \$2,500,000 in total funding over the period with a mid-term review and adjustment based on the performance of the implementation. The actual funding amount is subject to availability of funds and performance over the mid-term review. MEC reserves the right to fund any or none of the interventions submitted.
3. **Start Date and Period of Implementation for this Awards:** The anticipated period of implementation is two years and three months (1st March 2023 – 31 May 2025) and is divided by a mid-term review in the middle of the project period. Based on the programmatic review of the progress and implementation successes of the first one year period, adjustment of the award will be made as necessary.
4. **Substantial Involvement of MEC:** Substantial Involvement of MEC is expected in this award. Specific areas will be discussed collaboratively during finalisation of the annual plan and programme review process.
5. **Eligible organisation:** Organisations (or a consortium of organisations) in Myanmar are eligible to submit proposals as part of the Supporting Education in Monastic Schools grant application process. All applicants must have the ability to implement activities in Myanmar. Organisations eligible for this grant include;
 - a. National or International NGOs;
 - b. Academic institutions, advocacy groups, and umbrella organisations that represent multiple NGO members.
 - c. Local organisations operating in specific states, divisions & regions in Myanmar.
 - d. Private sector entities, such as companies, social enterprises and associations.

Additional eligibility requirements and restricted activities – The applicants must meet the following additional requirements to remain eligible to receive funding.

- Applicants must be established organisations and in good standing within their community and with the monastic sector stakeholders.
- Applicants must demonstrate alignment with the values of MEC.
- Applicants must display sound management of written financial, administrative and technical policies and procedures and present a system of controls that safeguard assets, protect against fraud, waste, and abuse, and support the achievement of project goals and objectives.
- Applicant organisations must demonstrate a commitment to child safeguarding, gender equality, disability and social inclusion through integration of GEDSI considerations into every aspect of their operations and approach to the proposed interventions.
- MEC does not fund inherently religious activities. Note also that “Construction Activities” (construction, infrastructure, renovation, or rehabilitation activities) are not funded by MEC. Successful applicants will also need to adhere to other donor compliance requirements, which will be explained in detail following acceptance of proposals.
- Successful proposals will be asked to work with the MEC team to demonstrate where expected outcomes and results can align to the Result Framework of MEC Phase -3 strategy.
- The recipient is responsible for ensuring the achievement of the programme objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The awardee assumes responsibility for administering the fund in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, programme plans, and the terms and conditions of the award.

SECTION 5. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS:

5.1 MEC Point of Contact

The point of contact for information about this call for proposal is -

Email: RFP@myanmareducationconsortium.org

5.2 The evaluation criteria:

The application process requires responses to this call with a full and comprehensive technical and financial proposal. Applicants will receive detailed proposal development instructions upon request. The proposals will be evaluated by MEC based on a standard set of criteria as outlined below.

Sr	Description	Weight
----	-------------	--------

1	Clear definition of the problem(s) and how the applicant intends to address them.	5%
2	Clear definition of the outputs that logically contribute to the MEC strategy, goals and objectives.	5%
3	Technical merit, as aligned with the proposed interventions.	30%
4	Demonstration of the applicant's ability to manage risks associated with the implementation of the project activities.	15%
5	Demonstration of organisational commitment to meet the needs of children that have been traditionally socially or culturally excluded or otherwise underrepresented in education.	15%
6	Organisational capacity, including demonstrated past performance, of the applicant (or lead applicant in the case of a consortium) to manage funding equal to or more than the budgeted value of the proposal.	10%
7	Cost realism and value for money with clear demonstration of how the project will be a cost-effective means for achieving the programme's objectives.	15%
8	Demonstration of experience and capacity to work collaboratively with other organisations / groups to achieve improvements in education.	5%
<p>Proposals will be assessed against each criterion with scoring according to the following scale and weighted as per the above:</p> <p>0 - Proposal fails to address the criterion</p> <p>1 - The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses</p> <p>2 - The proposal broadly addresses the criterion but there are inherent weaknesses</p> <p>3 - The proposal addresses the criterion well, but shortcomings are present</p> <p>4 - The proposal addresses the criterion well with few shortcomings</p> <p>5 - The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion.</p>		

MEC reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.

5.3 Application process and submission instruction: The following application process will be followed:

#	ACTION	DUE DATE	DESCRIPTION OF TASKS	RELEVANT FORMS & DOCUMENTS
1	Initial Application submitted by the applicants	31 January 2023	<p>The applicants submit the Initial Application to MEC.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Technical proposal 2) Risk Management Plan 3) Result Framework 4) Financial proposal <p>The initial application will be submitted by email to: RFP@myanmareducationconsortium.org</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical Proposal Template 2. Risk Management Plan Template 3. Result Framework Template 4. Financial proposal Template
2	Proposal Review Feedback:	10 February 2023	<p>Upon completion of the MEC review of the Initial Application, MEC will provide its feedback to the applicants including questions for further clarification (if required).</p> <p>(MEC will organise a feedback meeting with the applicant if deemed necessary.)</p>	- Feedback Form
3	Applicants submit the revised proposal.	24 February 2023	<p>Based on the feedback, the applicant will re-submit the proposal (and relevant responses as requested / required along with other required documents) in line with the feedback provided by MEC.</p>	- Proposal (v2)

4	Inform Applicant of Decision, Plan for Implementation	17 March 2023	<p>After the feedback has been addressed, MEC will seek approval from the Steering Committee.</p> <p>Once approved by the Steering Committee, MEC will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send approval to applicant. 2. Sub-award Agreement signing 3. Kick-off Meeting to provide orientation on implementation requirements 4. Establish next steps for the implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decision letter/E-mail to Applicant - Sub-award agreement package - Kick-off meeting agenda
<p>If the Feedback provided by MEC on the initial submission is not satisfactorily addressed by the applicants in their revision, MEC reserves the right not to fund the proposal.</p>				
<p>Submission Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All applications must be delivered in English language & via electronic format. Applications must be submitted in Microsoft Word and / or Excel formats as an attached document to: RFP@myanmareducationconsortium.org • Incomplete submissions may mean non-processing or significant delay in processing of the proposals. • Questions or requests for clarification concerning this call for proposal must be submitted to RFP@myanmareducationconsortium.org by 20 December 2022. Response to questions and clarifications will be made by MEC by posting written responses on the MEC website on 30 December 2022. • Application Templates – applicants must prepare and complete the proposal using the template provided in Attachments (Technical application, Risk Management Plan, Result Framework and Financial Application). • Applicants must not submit more than one application per organisation. However, sub-partners in a Consortium can join more than one Consortium as a sub-awardee. 				

SECTION 6. BUDGET APPLICATION GUIDE

1. Financial proposal and Budget Narrative: The Financial Proposal must be submitted in Excel Template provided by MEC. The Budget Narrative must contain sufficient detail to allow MEC to understand the proposed costs and be thorough, including sources for costs to support MEC's determination that the proposed costs are fair and reasonable.
2. MEC Phase 3 "Budget Guideline and the Donor Conditions" will be provided by MEC upon request and be followed for the preparation of the budget for this application.

3. Instruction for specific cost items:

- a. **Salary:** This refers to the cost of services of project staff directly involved with project activities. Salaries must be budgeted in the units in which the staff are paid. For example, if an applicant pays its employees monthly rates, then the unit of measure in the budget should be the month and rate per month for each employee must be used. All salary for staff directly involved in the project must be budgeted under the “Staffing Cost” category in the budget sheet. And cannot be embedded into any activity line. The budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort and salary escalation factors for each position. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant’s written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and support market research. Any staff who receive salary from the project cannot be hired and paid as a consultant for another specific task or activity.
- b. **Staff Fringe Benefits:** These are any employment benefits that staff paid from this project will receive as per the organisation’s HR policy. These benefits should be calculated based on the standard employment benefits offered by the organisation and should follow the existing HR policy of the applicant.
- c. **Construction:** No construction activities will be funded under this award.
- d. **Consultants:** This category should be used when hiring an individual to give professional advice or services for a fee, but not as an employee of the grantee organisation. Written approval must be obtained from MEC prior to establishing a written agreement for consultant services and must be obtained on a case-by-case basis with the information associated with the consultants and service to be rendered and drafted agreement.
- e. **Contractual Costs:** Applicants must obtain written approval from MEC prior to establishing a third-party contract to perform programme activities. Approval by MEC to utilise the funds and initiate programme activities through the services of a contractor requires the submission of the Name of Contractor, Method of Selection, Period of the Assignment, Scope of Work, itemised budget, and justification.

Payment method:

Advance payment method will be applied because activities and other costs incurred for the project implementation need to be prefunded, which can be a challenge for the partner without healthy reserves, access to unrestricted funding or other forms of financing. However, as described in the modality section above, a payment by results system based on an agreed matrix to assess performance against set indicators will be used to trigger release of the next

tranche of funding; MEC has the right to claim back funds advanced and withhold and/or adjust the next tranche payment under this award if the agreed deliverable/milestones are not delivered by the partner within the agreed timeline.