1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. The Education for All - Fast Track Initiative (EFA FTI) was launched in 2002 as a global partnership that focuses on accelerating progress toward universal primary school completion of quality education for boys and girls alike by 2015. It arose out of the commitments of the World Education Forum in Dakar (2000) which adopted a range of goals and targets to achieve Education for All. It styled itself as a "compact" in which credible education sector plans (ESPs) would receive support to ensure their fulfillment. It tried not to operate as a global fund by emphasizing coordinated action at the country level and by putting primary responsibility on in-country donors to mobilize and deliver external support for education sector plans that the EFA FTI endorsed. A centrally operated Catalytic Fund (CF) has become an increasingly important feature of EFA FTI, which has also provided technical support through an Education Program Development Fund (EPDF). By the end of 2009, the FTI had endorsed 40 countries’ education sector plans.

1.2. According to the 2009 mid-term evaluation, EFA FTI “did not establish a proper results-oriented monitoring and evaluation framework [...] to monitor country and global processes” [paragraph 64 p. XXI Main report]. As a result, it was not really possible to assess the impact of the FTI partnership at the country or global level. The report identified numerous weaknesses in FTI’s monitoring and evaluation including:

- Unclear strategies to achieve FTI objectives.
- Lack of an agreed-upon results chain linking the available inputs and activities to the desirable outputs and outcomes.
- Lack of indicators of success.
- No thorough description of the data collection processes.
- The indicative framework was not used.

1.3. When EFA FTI was established, it was decided that the Secretariat would not have a substantial role in monitoring and evaluation. This function was given to other organizations such as UIS, UNESCO, DAC, and the World Bank, but with no clear responsibilities.
1.4. In order to build international financial support for basic education and for the FTI trust funds, it is incumbent for the FTI Partnership to have a robust M&E strategy. The development and implementation of an M&E strategy will improve the management of EFA FTI and boost its credibility.

2. **OBJECTIVE**

2.1. The contractor will support the FTI Secretariat in designing a monitoring and evaluation strategy for the EFA FTI Partnership. The design should integrate the multiple components of the Partnership into a coherent model. Design and data collection procedures should adequately estimate various aspects of the FTI’s effect on partner countries as well as on donor coordination practices at various points in time.

3. **KEY ASSUMPTIONS**

3.1. The evaluation procedures must be viewed as independent from influence by any donor.

3.2. The rationale and reports must be clear and comprehensible to partner staffs that lack specialized training.

3.3. The implementation of FTI country plans is at various stages, with some being completed, while others are starting.

3.4. To make informed proposals, the contractor must become familiar with the background of the FTI Partnership, activities to date, problems and issues, such as those outlined in the mid-term evaluation (cf. 10. Reference Material).

3.5. The assignment is scheduled to start on September 1, 2010 and end on December 31, 2010.

3.6. The contract and follow-on work is subject to availability of funds and satisfactory performance by the contractor on this assignment.

4. **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONTRACTOR**

4.1. **Setting a background for the M&E framework, studying current practices:**

4.1.1. Analyze the mid-term evaluation, with a special focus on the weaknesses of the existing programs.

4.1.2. Present to the FTI Partnership the designs and relatively common indicators used to evaluate other complex programs. Examples would be the Global Health Fund, the Global Environmental Facility, the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) global programs, the M&E department of the International Monetary Fund, and various bilateral organizations. How do these organizations summarize the multiple sources of data, estimate effects, and make the outcomes comprehensible to the public?
4.1.3. Review the evaluation designs commonly used in education (e.g. basic logic modeling framework, theory-based evaluation, or various hybrids). This would give the FTI partners a sense of the options available. Pros and cons would be presented, such as data availability for various variables, cost, and time.

4.2. Identify indicators in the areas of impact, outcomes, and outputs of relevance to the FTI Partnership at the global level and develop specific indicators to track and monitor progress of FTI countries in meeting their stated ESP goals.

4.2.1. Identify sources and/or data collection tools for all indicators. The data to be collected are varied; some refer to country-level operations, others to global-level operations. The FTI Secretariat has spent much time developing indicators for various tasks. (See Annex VI of the mid-term evaluation and Secretariat draft accountability framework for possible indicators.)

4.2.2. Review the proposed indicators and determine which variables can and cannot be reasonably collected and which ones closely track the underlying constructs to be measured, given prior research. The contractor will then judiciously choose certain process and outcome variables to estimate effects at various points in time, given costs and the realities of data collection. Because much work has already gone into establishing indicators, the contractor would develop early on a data collection plan at multiple levels and seek the views of the relevant stakeholders.

4.2.3. Find out which variables the partner countries are monitoring, in what frequency, and how reliable these data are (typically produced by management information systems (MIS) in each country to be studied). Some guidance would be provided by the joint sector reviews that have taken place.

4.2.4. Develop the necessary baselines and corresponding milestones for all indicators.

4.2.5. The contractor will propose means for dealing with missing data at various points and how to impute values from various sources, such as reports of various agencies.

4.3. Develop an accountability matrix for all members of the Partnership, including donors, CSOs and the FTI Secretariat. The goal of the accountability matrix is two-fold: (i) it will define roles and responsibilities for all partners; and (ii) it will help to monitor the extent to which they have fulfilled their commitments.

4.4. Propose evaluation design choice to assess cause-effect relationships and measure impact.

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1 Under the current arrangement, “activities are vague and left to the discretion of the partners and partners cannot be held to account if they did not implement them” [mid-term evaluation, p. 2, Annex VI].
4.4.1. One or more evaluation designs are needed to put the data in context and summarize them so that final outcomes can be comprehensible. The contractor will develop parsimonious means of estimating the magnitude of the effect of various FTI interventions. The design would establish presumed cause-effect relationships, develop models, and test them for soundness.

4.4.2. The implementation of FTI country plans is at various stages, with some being completed, while others are starting. The contractor will use appropriate evaluation designs to measure the effects of the FTI Partnership and funding (randomized assignment to instructional improvements as they become available, robust quasi-experimental designs, ex post facto measurements, also qualitative assessments of stakeholder staff and FTI references in the media of various countries). Thus, individual or composite variables could be measured before and after various interventions.

4.4.3. The Partnership operates at multiple levels and has varied effects. The contractor should specify and propose how to measure the impact of these effects. There are potential global-level Partnership effects and global-level country-level effects; there are also potential local-level country and Partnership effects. (The draft accountability framework refers to some of these relationships.) Overall, these would roughly include:

- The effects of funding on country-level educational outcomes across time.
- The quality of feedback and advice from the FTI Secretariat in shaping country plans and implementing actions that will improve educational outcomes across time.
- The effects of advocacy and extent of public awareness.
- The effects of supervision by the supervising entity on the implementation of actions that will improve educational outcomes across time.

4.4.4. The effects of the FTI Partnership on specific countries are entwined with the effects of other donors. The contractor should propose means for measuring the incremental effects of the FTI Partnership. Methods might include statistical work or qualitative measures, such as tracking country-level decisions on a timeline vis-a-vis sector plan items. They could also include variables such as procedures to prepare teachers and inputs, instruction time, amount of curricula learned, learning outcomes, or the number of children enrolled in schools built after decisions contingent on FTI. The contractor will consider these various issues in detail and propose how to show effects.

4.4.5. The contractor will also propose means to estimate the counterfactual: what would be the state of various indicators if FTI had not existed? Assumptions and research or data will be needed to back up the estimate. The contractor could obtain possible guidance from other planning
documents developed by governments or donors, such as World Bank Country Assistance Strategies (CASs), and Poverty Reduction Sector Plans (PRSPs).

4.4.6. For the above choices, the contractor will assess various risks and uncertainties in various assumptions as well as mitigation strategies.

4.4.7. Instruments for collecting process and outcome data will include not only school-level enrollment data, but also learning assessments and stakeholders’ opinion surveys.

4.4.8. The contractor will consider the available sample-based achievement tests but also public examinations in the countries to be sampled. Special efforts will be made to estimate FTI’s effect on learning outcomes given administration schedules, psychometric issues, and grade levels of existing and planned examinations. The contractor will propose new tests if needed, such as the early-grade reading and math fluency tests (EGRA, EGMA).

4.4.9. To survey the decisions and opinions of various bodies or persons at various points in time, valid and reliable survey or interview instruments will be developed. Efforts will be made to turn these into quantitative summative scales rather than loose questionnaires. The contractor will also pilot these. The contractor will discuss procedures for validating data through triangulation methods.

4.4.10. The contractor will prepare a sampling plan to collect the data pertinent to the evaluation design chosen. Options will be presented to focus on a few specific countries among the 41 partners (choice to be made on criteria to be determined). With the countries-subjects, specific sampling procedures will be followed, which the contractor will specify. (Country-level studies will be produced under that option.)

4.4.11. Also, global-level respondents would be sampled to assess Partnership effects (e.g. donor staff, government officials, civil society organization members, fundraisers, etc.). The contractor would present a design with the rationale for the choices.

4.4.12. In all cases, the number of subjects chosen would take into consideration experimental power, the reliability of instruments, and expected magnitudes of effect to be detected.

4.5. Develop an engagement strategy to seek the views of the relevant stakeholders as part of the baseline and milestone development process.

4.6. Draft and finalize reports as described in section 7 of this Statement of Work.

4.7. Liaise with the FTI Secretariat.

5. FTI’S RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The FTI Secretariat team will facilitate the work, and liaise closely with the selected consultant(s) to ensure the quality and relevance of the output.
6. **Key Deliverables**

The M&E strategy will become operational by end of 2010 and will contain at least the following elements:

6.1. Logical framework to monitor the EFA FTI Partnership at the global level containing clear statement of objectives, inputs, activities, and output indicators.

6.2. An accountability matrix to monitor the commitments of the partners.

6.3. A specific results framework to monitor the performance of the Secretariat.

6.4. A mapping description of the country-level M&E process.

6.5. A comprehensive review of the joint sector reviews and their relevance to existing M&E mechanisms at the country level.

6.6. An evaluation design to assess cause-effect relationships and measure impact of FTI.

6.7. The identification of core education policy questions that require an in-depth analysis and that allow a better assessment of the effects of policy changes that have been supported by the EFA FTI Partnership, but for which knowledge gaps have been identified.

6.8. A list of countries proposed for the development of these studies.

6.9. A proposal for organizational changes required to implement the M&E strategy. The proposal should contain a full costing in both material and human resource components.

6.10. A risk analysis detailing the assumptions, level of risk, and mitigation strategies for the M&E strategy. The mitigation strategies should clearly spell out the specific mechanisms by which the Partnership can achieve its stated M&E objectives.

In addition, the contractor will be expected to:

6.11. Participate in a contract orientation session between the contractor’s key team members and FTI Secretariat to go over all aspects of the contract and develop a contract implementation strategy that clearly explains the process of consultation with the Partnership.


7. **Reports**

7.1 Two progress reports at the first third and second third of the contract.

The first progress report will provide a model of the M&E strategy that will be vetted by the FTI Board of Directors, which may or may not suggest modifications thereto.
7.2 The second progress report will contain the results of the Board’s input plus all of the research and preliminary findings from the work carried out in FTI partner countries.

7.3 The third and final report will present a fully developed and Board-vetted M&E strategy.

7.4 The contractor will deliver two workshops on the findings of the progress reports, at locations to be determined.

8. COMPLETION CRITERIA
The assignment will be considered complete when the FTI has received and accepted the final report prepared by the contractor.

9. REFERENCE MATERIAL
The firm will utilize for its work the following:
- Concept note and logical framework outline attached to this Statement of Work.
- Existing literature on models for M&E strategies in the context of developing countries.
- Documentation generated by the FTI Secretariat in the course of its M&E operations.
- Interviews with key individuals in the Partnership.
- Other data sources as warranted.