

SCM /Tender Ref #:	RFP 01 – 2023/24
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Request for proposals for:	The appointment of a service provider to conduct research on access to education support and services for children and young people with disabilities in South Africa – Phase 2
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1. BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

- 1.1 One of the key aspirations for a democratic dispensation is to strengthen the education system to redress the past educational gaps that disadvantaged children and young people with disabilities in the main. To achieve this, deriving its mandate from the Constitution,¹ the South African Schools Act, Act No 84 of 1996. Envisions a “strong foundation” for purposes of developing the talents and capabilities of all learners.² On the other hand, the National Development Plan (NDP) acknowledges that many persons with disabilities are not able to develop to their full potential due to a range of barriers, namely physical, information, and communication and attitudinal, among others.
- 1.2 Development of children and young people with disabilities had been a responsibility assumed by government through its commitment in the Education White Paper 6 of 2001.³ The White Paper also acknowledges a need to have a short- to medium-term solution approach to problems that manifested in the education system as a result of inequalities of the past regime, and that the effectiveness of the policy and its implementation should be re-looked at in the long term, with the policy implementation plan extending for a period of twenty years.⁴ It is for this reason that the DWYPD identified an opportunity to conduct a research on the implementation of the objectives of application of Education White Paper 6 in order to support the process of providing access to education support and services to children and young people with disabilities.
- 1.3 To this end, in 2022 the DWYPD entered into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), to conduct research seeking to identify the extent to which the Education White Paper 6 had been implemented. This research involved developing a Scoping and Rapid Evaluation Report on access to education support and services for children and young people with disabilities and included the development of a theory of change. This was the first phase of the project that extended from October 2022 to March 2023.

¹ See Section 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, for general protection of the right to education.

² See the preamble to the South African Schools Act (Act no. 84 of 1996).

³ See Education White Paper 6 “Building an Inclusive Education and training System for all” of 2001. Para 9.

⁴ Ibid.

1.4 Resultantly, the findings in the Scoping and Rapid Evaluation Report produced by the HSRC made it apparent that Phase 2 of the research needs to be commissioned. The HSRC focused on interviewing district education managers, educators of learners with special education needs and senior management at provincial and national level. As we need to have a clear picture of what is happening on the ground in terms of access to support and services of persons with disabilities, Lacking in the findings and in the Scoping and Rapid Evaluation Report compiled by the HSRC in Phase 1 is the inclusion of lived experiences and views of children and young people with disabilities, parents, caregivers and families of children with disabilities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Hence, a larger sample must be reached in order for the Department to also collect data that will directly come from people with lived experiences in terms of access to education which will ensure that we have a comprehensive research report that will inform both DBE and DWYPD on the situation on the ground, the gaps that exist and what solutions can be implemented to improve the status quo.

1.5 Data must also be collected from special and full-service schools in order to determine the level of support being received and the resources and assistive devices actually required in order to improve teaching and learning outcomes for children with disabilities. The aforesaid gaps in the research findings in phase one of the project due to saturation levels not being reached will be bridged in phase two of the research.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT / PURPOSE

2.1 Through this second phase of the research, the DWYPD intends to examine the extent to which the implementation of Education White Paper 6 has positively impacted on the lives of children and young people with disabilities in South Africa. It is common cause that the apartheid regime distributed resources on an unequal basis on the grounds of inter alia, race and disability. Education White Paper Six had sought to address these issues. Focus was to be on levelling the playing field to ensure that the disparities and inequality that existed in terms of education support and services, resources and assistive devices, access and equal participation in special schools and mainstream schools was addressed. Research has shown lack of accessible text books and assistive devices required by learners, inaccessible physical environments, inaccessible curriculum, untrained educators in terms of supporting learners with diverse needs, limited access to sign language interpreters, etc.⁵

⁵ See Section 27 Report: Failure to provide access to quality education to blind and partially sighted learners in South Africa", commonly referred to "left in the Dark", 2015.

- 2.2 Moreover, there is poor and inadequate support in mainstream and special schools for children with certain types of disabilities such as children with autism and children with multiple disabilities.
- 2.3 It was anticipated in Education White Paper 6 that full-service schools will be identified and resourced to cater for the needs of children with mild to moderate support needs. It is indicated by the Department of Basic Education that more than 800 mainstream neighbourhood schools have been designated as full-service schools. However, there is not yet sufficient evidence in terms of whether these full-service schools have the resources and support to provide learners, who have mild and moderate disabilities, with the learning and teaching support they require.
- 2.4 Further to this, the White Paper had acknowledged some shortcomings with its implementation, thus anticipating its review to ensure that all learners with disabilities do benefit.⁶ For this reason, a larger sample to ensure a realistic and reliable outcome is imperative.

3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF PROJECT

- 3.1 This second phase of the project will be grounded on the following objectives:
- a) Conducting a research study on a larger sample, including children and young people with disabilities; parents, caregivers and families of children with disabilities; and NGOs, to understand the lived experiences of recipients of the services.
 - b) Collecting data from special schools and full-service schools on access to education support and services for children and young people with disabilities so as to understand whether special schools and full-service schools are adequately resourced in terms of capacity and competencies of educators, accessibility, assistive devices, support staff etc.
 - c) Collect data on number of children of school going age with disabilities who remain out of school and the reasons for why they remain out of school.
 - d) Collect data from children and parents and caregivers of children attending special schools and full-service schools in terms of the education support and services they receive as compared to what they need.
 - e) Highlight the resources, assistive devices, support and services required by children with disabilities at identified special schools and full-service schools so the challenges and limitations can be alleviated.

⁶ See FN 4 above.

4. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY / APPROACH

- 4.1 As a continuation of the first phase of the project, the methodology for the second phase will include quantitative and qualitative methods through field research including key informant interviews and questionnaires on lived experiences of children and young people with disabilities, parents, caregivers and families of children with disabilities, NGOs, DPOs special schools and full-service schools. It is expected that the service provider shall endeavour to conduct interviews with a sample of at least: (a). forty parents/caregivers/family members of children with disabilities; (b). thirty children with disabilities; and (c). twenty NGOs. (These interviews can be conducted face to face or virtually). It is further required that questionnaires are administered with at least hundred special schools and two hundred full-service schools to elicit a quality and reliable data set. At least 5 focus group discussions must be held with relevant stakeholders. The sample included in the interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions must include respondents from urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

5. DELIVERABLES AND TIME FRAMES

Description	Expected date	% of project (Payment)
Sign Service Level Agreement	30 June 2023	
Obtain Ethical Clearance, develop Inception Report and Project Plan	31 July 2023	10%
Develop and finalise data collection tools	15 August 2023	15%
Complete research study	15 October 2023	
Develop research report and data analysis	31 October 2023	20%
Develop draft research report	15 December 2023	20%
Present peer reviewed report to validation workshop and develop Final research report	28 February 2024	20%
Develop power point presentation of the research report, Cabinet Memo and Presentation and submit all data collected to the DWYPD	15 March 2024	15%
Total		100%

6. PROJECT MANAGEMENT / REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 The DWYPD has appointed a Project Steering Committee to oversee and advise on phase one of the project and these members will remain part of the Project Steering Committee for phase two of the research. The Chief Director: G&C remains the Project leader and chair of the project steering committee. The service provider shall account to the Chief Director: G&C as Chair of the Steering Committee.

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- 6.2 All reports compiled by the service provider in respect of this project shall serve at the Steering Committee meetings for consideration and endorsement.

7. PEER REVIEW

- 7.1 The service provider, in consultation with the DWYPD, will appoint an independent expert to peer review the research report prior to it being finalised and approved by the DWYPD. The cost of the peer review must be factored into the budget of the service provider when submitting their quotation.

8. MEETINGS

- 8.1 The DWYPD shall convene the meetings of the Project Steering Committee and other team meetings with the service provider. These meetings will deliberate on reports and other relevant documents and deliverables that need to serve before the Steering Committee for consideration.