**Section 7: Terms of Reference**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**

**for**

**Selection of a Consulting Firm to Develop a Strategic Framework for the Establishment of TVET Research Institute**

**Eastern Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP)**

**(Credit No. 6335-ET; Grant No.: D395-ET; Project ID - P163399)**

**Ministry of Science and Higher Education**

**Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**

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1. **Introduction**

The Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE), established by proclamation number 1097/2018,Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation, is responsible to lead the development of science, higher education as well as the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Ethiopia. As one of the implementing entities of the Eastern Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP), the Ministry requires a Technical Assistance (TA) to develop a strategic document for establishment of a TVET Research Institute. These Terms of Reference (TOR) provide some introductory information with regard to the current status of TVET as well as the EASTRIP and describe the objectives and scope of the assistance, consulting firm’s services requirements, the schedule of work and the proposed arrangement, reporting requirements, and supports from MoSHE/EASTRIP to the consulting firm for the duration of the consultancy assignment.

* 1. **Background about TVET and Research in TVET**

The National TVET Strategy launched in 2008 and the subsequent TVET Proclamation No. 954/2016 have laid ground for governance, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the outcome-based TVET system in Ethiopia with a vision to create competent and self-reliant citizens to contribute to the economic and social development of the country, thus improving the livelihoods of all Ethiopians and sustainably reducing poverty. Based on the guiding principles and directions stipulated in the strategic document, several systemic, operational and quality improvement measures have been taken and remarkable achievements are registered specially in increasing access to TVET for those who are in need. Federal and regional regulatory as well as operational and TVET providing institutions are organized with duties and responsibilities identified following principles of decentralization.

The National TVET Strategy of2008had identified that TVET developments are hampered by a serious lack of relevant data and information about issues such as costs of TVET, labour market developments, availability and impact of existing TVET delivery schemes especially outside of the public TVET delivery system, perceptions of stakeholders, etc. and acknowledged the necessity of such information for planning, monitoring and innovation in the TVET system.

To fill this gap and enable the system make its decisions based on research findings and recommendations, the strategy has put a direction to build high quality domestic TVET research capacities as an integral unit of the federal and in the state TVET executive bodies with identified mandates related to research undertakings and management information system in TVET.

* identifying, compiling and managing available information on TVET in their areas of responsibility;
* making information available to interested stakeholders, i.e. through publishing research results;
* ensuring that information is appropriately taken into consideration in all planning and monitoring processes;
* identifying research needs;
* commissioning research projects to research institutions and supervising such research.
* becoming the anchor points of labor market monitoring for TVET and the TVET Management Information System to be established.

The TVET strategy also recommended the TVET authorities to take initiatives to strengthen other TVET research capacities, notably at those universities which are engaged in TVET teachers and instructor training as well as those Centres of Competence through:

liaising with the higher education sector and the concerned universities, colleges and centres about support to relevant human capacity building,

providing funding for research projects and commissioning research contracts to Ethiopian universities and other research institutions/,

ensuring that all TVET research conducted by international experts will be used for research capacity building within Ethiopia by anchoring such research projects to relevant Ethiopian institutions and assigning Ethiopian counterparts to international experts and

identifying research needs and priorities and developing a medium-term research plan to guide Ethiopian research institutions.

In line with the above mentioned strategic direction and as per its establishment regulation No. 199/201I issued by the Council of Ministers, the Federal TVET Agency (FTA) is mandated, among others, to enhance the implementation of the outcome based TVET system through action research and further studies. TVET Proclamation No. 954/2016, which has been launched to provide legal basis for the implementation of the TVET strategy, has also clearly indicated that research projects in the area of TVET shall focus on practical issues rather than theoretical ones and shall emphasize on the following:

1. developing qualitative and up to standard national capacity for technical and vocational education and training research;
2. undertaking labor market study;
3. disaggregating and analyzing information collected by various stakeholders in a manner relevant for technical and vocational education and training purposes;
4. undertaking action research on how to transfer of appropriate technology in efficient and effective manner.

Similarly, one of the objectives for establishment of the Federal TVET Institute (FTI) by the Council of Ministers Regulation No. 245/2011 has been to support result oriented TVET system through effective research undertakings. In line with this the institute has been given the power and duty, among others, to conduct researches relevant to the TVET sector and disseminate the results thereof to stakeholders.

In accordance with the proclamation number 1097/2018, Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation, Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) has been also given the power and duty, among others, to design and implement strategies to augment higher education and TVET institutions’ capacity in basic scientific studies and research; device opportunities for operationalization of scientific studies and research results. The Higher Education Strategic Center (HESC) has been given, among others, the responsibility of identifying research needs of the sector including TVET and coordinating research works being undertaken as response to the needs.

However, little has been done by the Ministry/HESC, authorities and institutions in the TVET sector, including the Federal TVET institute, towards realization of their mandates, resulting doing researches in unplanned, very fragmented and wasteful ways with no connection to the real problems the sector entangled with. In fact, the earliest education and training roadmap and other studies on TVET have found out that same problems prevailed years back remained unresolved and the system has stayed far behind from capturing, analyzing, organizing, storing and disseminating reliable and updated TVET data to users within and outside of the sector.

In general, due to this situation, the system has failed in making informed decision with regard to the different aspects of TVET and underlying problems of quality, relevance access and equity. In the era where information comes second to nothing, planning with no reliable background information and base data is planning to fail. And this is exactly what the TVET system has been practicing for years since the launch of the national strategy; trying to implement an outcome-based TVET system without having enough knowledge with regard to the demand from the world of work relying mostly on benchmarking documents and standards from other countries

* 1. **Background about EASTRIP**

The World Bank Group in consultation with national governments of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania has developed the Eastern Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP) to be implemented within the Eastern African countries of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania. The project was approved by the World Bank on 30th October 2018 and is expected to be in existence until 31st December 2024.

The overall objective of EASTRIP is to increase the access and improve the quality of Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) programs in selected Regional Flagship TVET Institutions (RFTIs) and to support regional integration in Eastern Africa. 16 Regional Flagship TVET Institutions were selected from the three participating countries on a competitive basis. The project supports the development of highly specialized TVET programs as well as industry-recognized short-term trainings. It will train technicians and provide training of teachers /trainers at TVET certificates and degree levels, targeting regional priority sectors in transport, energy, manufacturing, and ICT. The project development objectives (PDO) will be achieved through complementary interventions at three different levels:

1. **Strengthening selected Regional Flagship TVET Institutions for high-quality skills development in priority sectors:** The objectives of this component are to strengthen the capacity of the 16 Regional Flagship TVET Institutions(RFTIs) to produce high-quality skills for the regional sector markets in railway, highway, port management, energy, manufacturing, and ICT. RFTIs will be responsible for institution-level project implementation through their respective Project Implementation Units (PIUs).
2. The second component is **creating national TVET enabling environment**: Under this component, the project will finance the development of policy and guidelines to facilitate student, graduate, and faculty mobility and industrial partnership and strengthen the capacity of national agencies that are responsible for the approval of occupational standards, assessment tools, model curricula, Teaching Training and Learning Materials (TTLMs) and accreditation of TVET programs. National Project Coordination Units (NPCUs) will take care of these activities under the auspice of the responsible National Ministries.
3. The third component deals with **enhancing regional collaboration in TVET and project coordination**: The regional component will produce a set of harmonized standards towards mutual recognition of qualifications for priority occupations in participating countries in close partnership with the industry. The component will also support the dissemination of project lessons learned, networking, coordination, technical assistance, and monitoring and evaluation of the 16-regional flagship TVET institutions and the three national TVET systems. The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is selected to act as Regional Facilitation Unit (RFU) for the righteous implementation of activities under this component.

Accordingly, established by MoSHE, the National Project Coordination Unit (NPCU)will be dealing with the Component II of the EASTRIP-Ethiopia: implementing key project functions of creating enabling environment for the RFTIs in their effort to implement the project.

The NPCU will work closely with other TVET agencies, including the Federal TVET Agency (FTA), to execute the national work plan of the project and further provide national-level coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), dissemination of good practices from the TVET Institutions as well as provision of knowledge sharing and coordination avenues.

Thus, in connection with the above-mentioned functions assigned to component II and as elaborated through the National Work Plan, the following four subcomponents will fall under the responsibility of NPCU for Ethiopia:

1. Strengthening of quality assurance in the TVET sector,
2. Capacity building for TVET policy development and implementation,
3. Promoting regional integration,
4. Facilitating national project coordination (monitoring and evaluation) and
5. Support regional skills competition.

**2. Rationale for Establishment of the Research Institute**

Since the launch of the National TVET Strategy, subsequent regulation and proclamation have come into force and several measures have been taken towards its implementation. However, due to the fact that research and analysis about the contexts has not been taken as a starting point for measures to be pursued, little has been achieved in making TVET provisions responsive with regard to the fundamental aspects of education and training: quality, relevance access and equity.

As it has been clearly put though the TVET Proclamation No. 954/2016 that research projects in the area of TVET shall focus on practical issues with regard to the different aspects of an outcome-based TVET provisions; ranging from the initial labor market study up to employment and destination of TVET graduates. Accordingly, research in TVET is expected to look deep into those underlying processes (identifying competences in demand and organize as qualifications, developing and providing competence-based education and training, competence assessment and certification as well as employment creation) and work on quality standards with regard to their human and material inputs, throughput and outputs.

As TVET is basically to serve the industry and its labor market clients, action research works are distinctively expected to constantly follow and update information with regard to the dynamism of the labor market in terms of changing skills and job disruptive factors, including technological innovations, changes in work processes and organizations as well as man to machine relations driven by local and international markets for their products and services. The way the TVET sector prepares skilled workforce for the industry, through formal and non-formal provisions, has to be researched with respect to principles of didactics rather than based on mere pedagogical approaches. Root causes to problems chronic to industry extension and technology transfer services, provided by TVET institutions to enterprises, need to be duly assessed and policy recommendations come out for rectification.

Experiences from the current uncoordinated arrangements of research works as an integral part of regulatory authorities (FTA, HESC, RTVETAs) and TVET institutions (including FTI) have practically revealed that researches are fragmented with no real connection to real TVET problems whereby results are compromised, manipulated and sometimes undisclosed due to conflict of interest among these institutions. In fact, most of these authorities and institutions do procurement of research services instead of doing the research most likely due to lack of the capacity but also considering research as secondary to their primary responsibility as either a regulatory body or a training provider.

Though taken as part of the education and training sector and efforts are there to include TVET statistics in the yearly abstracts of the sector, TVET data has never been properly captured and no trustworthy information have been produced. This has actually emanated from features differing TVET provisions from the academic and general education programs. Indicators, measurements, data collection periods, etc. derived from the distinctive features TVET should be properly worked out and an appropriate management information system put in place in order to properly serve the system and users with the data they deserve.

In light of the above-mentioned expectations and peculiar nature of research in the sector as well as to break away from those fundamental problems chronic to the system through appropriate action research, establishment of an autonomous and dedicated Federal TVET Research Institute will be mandatory.

1. **The Consultancy Service**

This consultancy service as per these TOR will basically centered upon development of a strategic framework for establishment of TVET Research Institute with the capacity and structural arrangement appropriate to deliver its responsibilities as a central autonomous institution with regard to TVET research, management information system and provision of supportive and coordination services to research capacities within structures of the sector. Having this in mind, objectives and scope of the consultancy service are summarized as follows:

* 1. **General and Specific Objectives**

The general objective of this consultancy assignment is to develop a strategic framework for establishment of the TVET Research Institute. Specifically, the consultancy service is required to meet the following objectives:

* to come up with alternative institutional models that can be implemented and serve the purpose in the context of Ethiopia,
* to clearly define the role of the institute in terms of main areas of activities in the TVET system,
* to develop vision, mission and values and identify main stakeholders of the institute,
* to identify major and subsidiary functions/processes of the institute with indications on input, throughput and output for each function,
* to come up with an appropriate structure and capacity to discharge its responsibilities considering proper empowerment and delegation on making decisions,
* to recommend legal framework for the establishment of the institute as an autonomous federal institution, but still under an apex body and keeping connected with other research centres/units within and out of the TVET sector,
* to develop promotion, communication, engagement and partnership strategy for the institute with regard win-win collaborations with its clients, stakeholders and partners,
* to recommend a mechanism and criteria for identification of issues and needs and commissioning of research works under the auspice of the institute,
* to set minimum quality standards for research outputs in terms of template, methodology, content, etc.,
* to develop monitoring and evaluation tools for the research works under the institute and through other research capacities in the sector,
* to recommend funding alternatives and modalities for research works,
* for come up with innovative ideas on infrastructural needs of the institute, having in mind advantages from deployment of modern ICT,
* to work out an action plan for the establishment of the institute.
	1. **Scope and Approach of the Consultancy Service**

The consultancy service is limited to produce a strategic framework for the establishment of the TVET Research Institute, a national professional institute responsible for [research](https://www.ncver.edu.au/about/about-ncver/about-our-research) as well as collecting, analyzing organizing and communicating [statistics](https://www.ncver.edu.au/about/about-ncver/about-our-data) on Ethiopian TVET sector. To this effect the consulting firm is expected to undertake the following main tasks:

* Research, develop and propose roles (East African, National/Federal and Regional) and core business areas of the Research Institute and options for the formation and governance model of the institute;
* Develop the legal framework for the establishment of the institute as per the chosen model,
* Develop strategy including the implementation framework for the institute
* Suggest the required infrastructure (hardware, software, human resource, etc.) and resources required for the smooth and sustainable operation of the institute

In the course of attaining these tasks, the consultant shall consult the key stakeholders during the development and benchmarks and best practices. Upon the completion of each phase the consultant shall consult with the technical team to be formed by the Ministry and get approval from the highest Ministerial authority.

* 1. **Deliverables and Reporting Requirements**

The project deliverables and reporting requirements will consist of the following reports and documents:

1. **Inception Report:** Presented three weeks after mobilization and covering the consultants' Work Plan for the Project. The report shall include preliminary review of existing documents and practices with regard to research and statistics on TVET in Ethiopia. The Report will be prepared with an Executive Summary in 20 copies in English;
2. **Progress Reports:** the inception will be followed by a weekly/biweekly reports as a means of follow up for MoSHE/NPCU;
3. **Research report:** Proposing the various organisational models and roles of the research institute for MoSHE/NPCU to decide in consultation with the highest Ministerial management team;
4. **Draft Document:** For the chosen model and delivered one month prior to completion for comments from the stakeholders. Accompanying the draft document, a short report, summarizing activities accomplished so far and including an action plan to finalize the documents will be submitted. Both the draft document and the report will be prepared in 50 copies with softcopy in English to be presented for key stakeholders to comment;
5. **Final document:** Strategic framework that includes the legal framework (in English and Amharic versions), and organisational framework (role, processes, structure, etc.),as well as infrastructural and resource requirements. Delivered upon completion of the assignment by incorporating stakeholders’ comments on the draft. The documents will be prepared with an Executive Summary in 50 copies with softcopy in English.
6. **Final seminar**: The consulting firm is expected to present the final document at an appropriate venue to hold upwards of 100 participants of which their composition will be decided on due time.
7. **Exit report:** Presented upon closure of the whole assignment and termination of the consulting service. The report will include briefing final plans for follow-up and (optionally) setting the stage for future consulting
	1. **Expected Outcome of the Consultancy Service**

On successful delivery of the consultancy service and endorsement of the strategic document by the leadership, the TVET system in Ethiopia will benefit in various aspects as an outcome, To name a few:

* + An appropriate promotion and communication tool with regard to research and statistics on the TVET sector,
	+ Strategic directions for development of other necessary guidelines and working manuals for the system to properly function,
	+ Indicative information for decisions with regard to human, infrastructural and technological requirements of the TVET sector
	+ Access to quality outputs of research works and statistical analysis,
	+ Clarity and transparency on functions in terms of input, throughput and output, for the mandate of research works Creation of conducive environment to establish partnership and strong network at national and international levels
	+ Improved resource mobilization (human, financial & material) through strong support from government and partners and investment.
	+ Improved efficiency and effectiveness of the TVET provisions with regard to quality relevance and equitable access,
	+ Improved contribution of the TVET system and graduates to social and economic development of the nation,
	+ Partnering and playing a regional role in the Eastern Africa corridor; boost the regional integration,
	+ Improved governance and management of the TVET sector,
	+ Improvement in transparency, reliability and trustworthiness of the sector.
1. **Implementation Timeframe and Phases**
	1. **Timeframe**

The assignment will be undertaken and completed within the maximum of five (5) calendar Months. The inception report should be presented three (3) weeks after signing of the contract. The draft document is expected to be delivered by the end of the 4thmonth. The final document and exit report should be presented on completion of the service period.

* 1. **Implementation Phases**

The consulting firm is expected, but not limited, to follow the below mentioned phases:

**1. Inception Phase 1**:includes the initial contact with the MoSHE/NPCU, preliminary diagnosis of problems attached to research and data on the Ethiopian TVET system, planning of initial assignments and submission of an inception report to the client. The plan includes milestones, timelines, submissions of subsequent documents and debriefing sessions.

**2. Research Phase:** includes the real diagnosis/research of the problems and coming up with roles and alternative models for organizing and structuring the research institute applying different methods (observation, case study, sample survey, desk review or mixed methods) and then seeking client feedback on proposed actions.

**3. Development Phase:** includes the whole range of activities from drafting to finalization of the establishment framework documents for the chosen model. Since this phase has to be effectively managed, the consultant needs to look into details of essential activities while planning.

**4. Closure Phase:** includes presentation of the final document to the wider stakeholders and consideration of decisive comments thereof prior to submission of the final version of the document to MoSHE/NPCU accompanied by exit report. Briefing final plans for follow-up, collecting payment, and setting the stage for future consulting are subsequent activities during closure.

1. **Governance and Management**
	1. **MoSHE/NPCU**
* Will establish a Technical Team (TT), reporting to the State Minister and the National Project Coordinator, will be responsible to advise the leadership with regard to quality and timeliness of deliverables from the consulting firm;
* Ensure the cooperation of relevant identified stakeholders to: assign a contact person(s) for the service responsible to facilitate communication and the undertaking of activities that works towards effective and efficient outcome;
* Avail staffs for access to information of various kinds in methods like group discussions or individual interviews with the consultant and other engagements;
* Provide prompt feedback on enquires, reports, and other deliverables.
* NPCU as the focal point of the contact for the implementation of the assignment will:
	+ provide (if required for the Team Leader) an appropriate working space, and access to office support office equipment and necessary documentations upon request by the consultancy firm;
	+ facilitate stakeholder participation throughout system development process; including managing the workshop
	1. **Consulting Firm**
* Assign a focal point (Team leader) to liaison with the NPCU,
* Assign qualified professionals to the specific assignment agreed,
* Submits progress reports and expected deliverables regularly,
* Incorporate feedback collected from the MoSHE/partner institutions and the Technical Team,
* Builds and maintains positive and professional working relationship with stakeholders
* Adhere to quality of works and maintain professionalism.
* Deliver the final documents with editable formats on the specified deadline with maximum quality.
* Liaison with the Technical committee formed by and reporting to the State Minister,
* Must not be engaged in other activities; unrelated to the Ministry’s engagements; that affect the project during the consultancy work.
1. **Values**
* Trust of the client
* Trusting the consulting team and the firm
* Confidentiality
* Honesty
* Due diligence
* Skill
1. **Qualifications of the Consultancy Firm**

The assignment will be managed by a qualified and experienced consulting firm, who has relevant experience and expertise in the TVET sector supporting policy development/reform, implementing institutions establishment/restructuring as well as TVET quality and relevance enhancement with a minimum of 5 years’ experience in the business.

The Consulting Firm will provide a team of experts with the following skill sets who shall be adequately qualified and experienced in the Education Sectors and related fields to satisfactorily and timely deliver the expected outcomes.

CVs for Technical Experts, including the Consultant Team Leader, should be consistent throughout this assignment, and will be examined during the proposal review process. The team of experts to work on this assignment will not change without prior approval by NPCU.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Name of Position** | **Academic Qualification** | **Experience** |
| 1 | Team Leader | MA/MSc in Social and Development Studies, Management, Education, Economics and other related fields | * At least 10 years of demonstrable experience in their fields of TVET sector in policy making, teaching and leading institutions
* Demonstrable experience working in leading teams consisting of specialists in multitude of areas of expertise and establishment of systems/institutions
* Experience in establishing RI or managing in a Research Institute
* Proficiency in English language and knowledge of at least one Ethiopian national/working language
 |
| 2 | IT specialist | Post-graduate qualifications in the fields relevant to the expertise MSc in Computer science, MIS and related fields | * At least 5 years direct & relevant work experience in the area of speciality
* Demonstrable experience working on institutional networking and establishment of web-supported database and management information system
* Exposure in TVET and or Higher education
 |
| 3 | TVET Policy Analyst | Post-graduate qualifications in the fields relevant to the TVET Management, TVET Policy, Vocational Management and related fields | * At least 5 years direct & relevant work experience in the area of speciality
* Demonstrable experience working on development policy/system/strategic documents
* Demonstrable experience working within outcome-based TVET system
* Excellent understanding of outcome-based TVET system
 |
| 4 | Statistician | Post-graduate qualifications in the fields relevant to the expertise in Statistics or related field | * At least 5 years direct & relevant work experience in the area of speciality
* Demonstrable experience working with both quantitative and qualitative data
* Experience in designing and managing data system
* Exposure in TVET and or Higher education
 |
| 5 | Legal expert | Post-graduate qualifications in the fields relevant to the expertise in Law | * At least 7 years direct & relevant work experience in the area of speciality
* Demonstrable experience working in decentralized legal system and drafting institutional establishment proclamations/regulations
* Good understanding of decentralized administrative/legislative system
* Exposure in TVET and or Higher education
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