**Section 7: Terms of Reference**



**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**

**For**

**Selection of a Consulting Firm to Develop Occupational Standards and Assessment Tools for Occupations in the EASTRIP Priority Sectors**

**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**

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**Acronyms**

AT(s) Assessment Tools(s)

CF Consulting Firm

CoC(s) Centre(s) of Competence

EASTRIP Eastern Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project

FTA Federal TVET Agency

IDA International Development Associations

MoSHE Ministry of Science and Higher Education

NPCU National Project Coordination Unit

OS(s) Occupational Standard(s)

PDO Project Development Objective

TAP Technical Advisory Panel

TEP Technical Expert Panel

TVET Technical and Vocational Education and Training

WB World Bank

1. **Introduction**

The Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE), established by proclamation number 1097/2018 in October 2018, 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 Occupational Standards (OSs) and Assessment Tools (ATs) for occupations to be identified in EASTRIP-priority sectors. These Terms of Reference (TOR) provide some introductory information with regard to the current status of TVET, and more specific to the currently prevailing responsibilities and practices in developing OSs, as well as the project 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 Ethiopian TVET System**

The National TVET Strategy launched in 2008 and the subsequent TVET Proclamation No. 954/2016 have laid ground for governance, standards development, implementation, occupational assessment and certification as well as for monitoring and evaluation of implementation 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 and operational 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 and the federal government administrative structure.

The Federal TVET Agency has been established as an autonomous federal government organ having its own legal personality through the Regulation No.199/201l issued by the Council of Ministers. Being accountable to the then Ministry of Education, and currently to MoSHE, the Agency has an objective, among others, to ensure that TVET is properly organized and its quality and sustainability are maintained with a view to realizing the country's objectives for economic and social progress. The Agency is empowered to develop legislative frameworks, standards and required for the implementation of the strategy, including establishment of a system for occupational standard development and occupational assessment and certification. These duties and responsibilities of the Federal Technical and Vocational Education and Training Agency have been further solidified by the Federal Government Proclamation No. 954/2016 which mandated the Agency to coordinate the overall technical and vocational education and training system.

In line with the proclamation, mentioned above, developing OSs and ATs remained under the responsibility of the Agency. Taking the TVET strategic directions and benchmarking best practices and methodologies from selected countries, manuals for OS and AT development have been developed and put in practice. The strategy, and therefore the manuals, calls for active participation of experts from the world of work as well as close consultation and endorsement of the OS documents by sector leading authorities, namely, Ministries. This has been practiced for the years passed since the launch of the National TVET strategy and close to 750 OSs with 740 ATs, for almost all the OSs, have been developed covering almost all socio-economic sectors of the country.

Though, through time some positive developments have been observed, the Agency is still struggling in bringing the industry on board for their active participation, and enabling to ultimately take the leading role, in the whole range of activities from occupational classification and mapping to the endorsement of the OS documents. Such a condition has obliged the Agency to rely more on benchmarking of similar documents from other countries like Australia, the Philippines and Germany with very limited expertise inputs from the industry. Though participation of industry experts in the development has been observed and sector leading Ministries are still made to give their final blessings on the OS standards, the actual workplaces tend to deny and reject the existence of such standards, leading to much less trust from the industry on the TVET system to provide them the workforce they require. This has been aggravated by the absence of organized and structured industry and stakeholders’ representation and inactiveness of the National TVET council.

The earliest roadmap study for education and training also indicated that the TVET system suffers from lack of strong and formal partnership with the industry leading to mismatch between the supply from TVET and demand for skilled workforce from the industry.

In general, the very limited engagement of the industry in the OS and AT development processes, coupled with lack of dependable information with regard to the labour market demand, has remained fundamental hindrance for the TVET system in supplying the different socio-economic sectors with fit-to-purpose workforce.

Role of the Federal TVET Agency acting both as regulatory and undertaking the operation of OS and AT packages development might be one of the areas to be further researched from the quality assurance perspective.

* 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.
6. **Rationale for Development of OSs and ATs by a Consulting Firm**

As major features of a competence-based education and training approach and decisive milestones in the whole outcome-based TVET process, OS and AT development have remained agenda during most discussions at system level since the launch of the National TVET Strategy. Subsequent consultations, benchmarking and tryouts have been also carried out to decide on the methodology and develop working manuals for both development works. As the manual have been used for years with little improvement, and it seems now the time has come to review them and check the whole process with the view of producing quality OS documents and AT packages and special emphasis regarding the following aspects:

* Facilitating harmonization of qualifications for regional integration and skills mobility within East African region
* Securing and utilizing labour market information and trends for better linkage of OSs and ATs to the actual need for competent workforce,
* More effective means and ways of making the processes more transparent and industry engaging,
* Effective strategy for promotion to and communication to get the industry on board and pave the way for the industry to gradually take up its ownership in developing OSs and certifying competences,
* Installation of more effective and efficient OS and AT development processes as well as follow up and quality assurance mechanisms for both,
* Strategy for adaptation/adoption of documents and packages of similar purpose from benchmarked countries,
* More user friendly templates for both OS documents and AT packages.

OSs and ATs to be developed by the Consulting Firm are expected to be of high quality not only serving as basic reference and tools for the succeeding activities of curriculum development and assessment and certification of competences with positive impact on the processes in the future.

1. **The Consultancy Service**

This consultancy service, as per these TOR, will basically center upon identification of 17 most demanded occupations within the EASTRIP priority sectors followed by development of OSs and AT Packages in close collaboration and consultation with the Federal TVET Agency, which has the mandate to undertake these activities at national level and expected to play the central role in and benefit from the capacity building activities in the form of training, workshop and experience sharing through the consultancy assignment. Having this in mind, objective, scope, methodology and expected outcome of the consultancy service are summarized as follows:

* 1. **Objective of the Consultancy**

The main objective of this contractual assignment from MoSHE/NPCU is to search out service from a highly qualified and experienced Consulting Firm in identifying 17 demanded occupations within the EASTRIP priority sectors followed by development of Occupational Standards (OSs) and Assessment Tools (ATs) packages for all levels of those occupations.

Specifically, the consultancy service is required to fulfill the following objectives:

* to make a review of Ethiopian TVET system documents including TVET strategy, qualifications framework and the contemporary OS and AT development manuals,
* to revise the OS and AT development manuals, following agreements reached during discussions on the system review report,
* to undertake initial labour market study to identify demanded skills and appearing occupations in the EASTRIP priority sectors taking also Eastern Africa regional contexts into consideration in addition to the Ethiopian market,
* to establish TEPs for each occupation consisting of defined number of selected experts from the industry based on agreed upon criteria,
* provide OS and AT Packages development training to members of the TEPs and experts and managers from MoSHE, FTA and relevant industry stakeholders including (potential) members of TAPs,
* to develop high quality OS documents and AT packages for occupations identified.
  1. **Scope and Approach of the Consultancy Service**

The assignment of the CF is to develop high quality 17 OSs, and the necessary AT packages, for occupations to be identified from the three EASTRIP priority sectors: **Transport/Infrastructure**, **Energy/Power** and **Manufacturing** that includes the **Agro processing, Leather, Textile & Garments** as well as **Die Making and Precision Tools** sub-sectors. The service requires starting with the review of the system and more specifically the methodology being applied for both processes by the FTA. Working closely with NPCU, and technically more with FTA, in discharging its responsibilities, the Consulting Firm will be tasked, but not be limited to:

* develop an inception report that includes initial review of Ethiopian TVET system, with regard to OS and AT development practices against best practices and lessons from other countries, and a work plan for the whole assignment;
* critically review the OS and AT development system documents and practices currently in use (legislatives, TVET strategy, qualifications framework, Manuals for OS and AT development, sample OS document and AT packages) and produce a report that identifies strength and weakness along with recommendations in reference to basic principles of outcome-based TVET and best practices from East African region and around the world;
* present preferred methodologies for both development works (OS & AT), along with templates/formats, to MoSHE, NPCU and FTA by portraying similarities to and differences from what is put in the respective manuals;
* undertake initial labour market study in EASTRIP-priority sectors to identify changes in the demand side in terms of skills and newly appearing occupations with the target also meeting EASTRIP objectives of regional integration and skills mobility; Consultation with the Regional Flagship Institutions will be vital towards this end as all of them are expected to conduct study of the labour market in the respective sectors.
* identify industry partners in the respective sectors and establish good communication with a view of sourcing/hiring experts as members of TEPs and smoothening the validation and endorsement of documents at later stage of the processes;
* develop training materials and provide members of TEPs along with managers from the industry and focal persons and experts assigned from FTA with an intensive and hands-on training to enable them mastering the methodology agreed upon;
* position the newly identified occupations in the occupational map of the respective sector, in consultation with responsible TEPs and FTA experts, by indicating their levels of qualification and vertical progression and horizontal relation with other occupations within the sector.
* draft OS documents and Assessment plan with complete content and active participation of TEPs and experts from FTA and present them to members of TAPs for their inputs (feedbacks, comments) and validation,
* prepare final OS documents and AT packages (of three (3) versions) by incorporating feedbacks from discussions with members of TAPs draft OS documents and Assessment plan and present the OS documents in five (5) hardcopies along with a softcopies of both the OS and AT packages in English,
* produce intermediate and exit reports on implementation of the whole assignment indicating progresses made against the work plan, activities conducted and deliverables, lessons learnt, major changes made with regard to methodologies as well as recommendations on the way forward,
  1. **Deliverables and Reporting Requirements**
* The selected firm is required to provide the following deliverables and report in a timely manner during the course of the implementation of the assignment. All deliverables, including reports, will be discussed with the Technical Team representing MoSHE and approved by MoSHE/NPCU. The list of deliverables and reporting requirements includes the following:

1. **Inception report:** Presented within three weeks after signing of the contract and prior to actual commencement of the main task with details on tasks and the respective methodologies along with clear work plan, which will be discussed with and approved by MOSHE/NPCU,
2. **System review report:** shall include a review of existing TVET system documents including the National TVET Strategy, regulations and proclamations as well as the OS and AT development manuals. The report shall indicate major pitfalls in existing OS and AT development process along with recommendations for rectifications. The report shall further include summary of consultations with stakeholders from both public and private sectors as well as lessons from benchmarking study tour to countries in East African region. The Report will be prepared with an Executive Summary in 20 copies in English;
3. **Progress report:** submitted on a defined timely (weekly or biweekly) basis to the MoSHE/NPCU on the progress of whole assignment,
4. **Training:** Delivered on the first 2-3 days of OS and AT development workshops to members of TEPs and FTA experts on the tools, procedures and templates for OS and AT development, As part of preparation for the training the necessary revision of the existing manuals will be done by the CF and training materials be developed accordingly.
5. **Draft OS and Assessment Plan documents:** Delivered, accompanied by a brief report on the development process each standard, within a week after a workshop for development of OS(s) is carried out to MoSHE/NPCU and FTA for validation by the respective TAPs. The documents will be prepared in [10] hardcopies along with a softcopy in English.
6. **Final OS documents AT Packages:** Delivered to MoSHE/NPCU and FTA within two (2) week after validation workshop (the cost of the workshop will be managed by the client) by incorporating comments from members of the respective TAP and properly edited. The OS document for every occupation will be prepared, with a brief report on the whole process, in 5 (five) copies along with a softcopies of the OS and AT Packages (of three (3) versions) in English.
7. **Exit report**: Presented to NPCU upon the completion of the whole assignment and closure of the consulting service. The report will include briefing final plans for follow-up and (optionally) setting the stage for future consulting with regard to continuing activities attached to implementation of the OS documents and AT packages on the ground.
   1. **Expected Outcome of the Consultancy Service**

* After the successful delivery and achievement of expected results from the consultancy service; the following are envisaged as an outcome:
  + Clearer definition of roles to be played by the industry structures like the sector leading Ministries, TEPs and TAPS with regard to OS and AT packages development,
  + Revised manuals for future use at system level to develop quality OS documents and AT packages that can properly serve as reference for training provisions and certification of qualifications,
  + Strengthened and meaningful collaboration among the different stakeholders from the demand and supply sides of the labour market with positive impact on the implementation of the outcome-based National TVET Strategy,
  + Increased reliability and trustworthiness of the TVET programs and certificates among its clients and stakeholders,
  + Narrowed skills gap between the demand from the industry and the supply from the TVET side,
  + Improved motivation to contribute and mobilize resources (human, financial & material) from the industry to the education and training sector,
  + Smoothened process of bringing about industry engagement in and ownership of the TVET system,
  + Improved efficiency and effectiveness of TVET investment (efficient utilization of available resources),
  + Improved contribution of the TVET system and its products to social and economic development of the nation.

1. **Implementation Timeframe and Phases**
   1. **Timeframe**

The whole assignment will be undertaken and completed within maximum of six Months from the date of signing of the contract agreement.

* 1. **Phases of Implementation**

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

**Phase 1** includes the initial contact with the MoSHE/NPCU, preliminary diagnosis of problems attached to Ethiopian TVET system with regard to OS and AT development, planning of initial assignments and submission of an inception report to the client. The plan includes milestones, timelines for the different activities attached to the assignment.

**Phase 2** includes system review which majorly requires comparative analysis of the Ethiopian OS and AT development processes with best practices around the world in terms of inputs, throughput and outputs. Approaches and methodologies, stakeholders’ engagements as well as quality of products will be subjects of the analysis. This might be best done through desk review of system documents, working manuals and OS documents developed previously. Best practices from other countries can easily be found through browsing and/or virtual communications with the respective organizations. Information to be acquired from the benchmarking study tour to East African countries will be of a great importance in getting their experiences in this regard. During this phase, the CF is also required to establish communications with targeted stakeholders from the TVET sector and the industry and duly consider their needs and concerns while diagnosing the problems and proposing remedial actions. Upon completion of this phase the CF will submit a system and methodological review report and, if necessary, the revised manuals for MoSHE/FTA endorsement.

In parallel to reviewing the system and methodologies, the CF is required to identify the 17 occupations in the three (3) sectors through a labour market study of a regional scope and position them in the respective occupational maps for the sectors in close collaboration of FTA.

**Phase 3** is the phase within which major part of the assignment will be completed. Formation of the necessary TEPs, (if necessary) revision of the OS and AT development manuals, training of members of TEPs and experts from FTA, drafting the OS documents and AT packages for all the 17 occupations and presenting these for TAPs during validation workshops are tasks foreseen for this phase.

**Phase 4** includes finalization of the OS documents and AT packages considering feedbacks from the validation workshops and submission of clean documents and packages to FTA for getting them endorsed by sector leading Ministries.

**Phase 5** includes closure and termination of the consulting service as per these ToRs. This consists of submission of the final documents with exit report to MoSHE/NPCU, briefing final plans for follow-up, collecting payment, disengaging, and setting the stage for future consulting.

1. **Governance and Management**
   1. **MoSHE/ NPCU, FTA and other Responsible TVET Institutions**

* NPCU is the focal point of contact in the implementation of the assignment and to provide the day-to-day guidance during the service period,
* The Technical Team (TT), established by and reporting to the State Minister of MoSHE and the National Project Coordinator, will be responsible to work closely with the consulting firm and to assure the quality of outputs in all phases,
* FTA, mandated to the development of OS and AT packages and with central role to play, will assign a counterpart and expert(s) for every sector/occupation to work closely with the CF during all the activities attached to the assignment including labour market study, training, development and validation workshops in providing necessary documents and information as well as support upon request from the CF and smoothening communication between FTA and CF.
* MoSHE/NPCU will organize and cover attached costs to sector level meetings with leaders and representatives from relevant public and private organizations/associations upon request from the CF and based on agreed work plan.
* Regional TVET Authorities, CoCs and TVET providing institutions will collaborate with CF in providing necessary information and allow observation to some of the day-to-day activities, which the CF considers as important for his assignment,
* Avails staffs for access to information of various kinds in methods like group discussions or individual interviews with the consultant and other engagements.
* Provides prompt feedback on enquires, reports, and other deliverables.
  1. **Consulting Firm**
* Assign qualified professionals to the specific agreed assignments
* Establish appropriate teams incorporating experts from the industries
* Provide training to the stakeholder on the entire process of OS and AT development processes
* Submits progress reports and expected deliverables timely
* Capture and incorporate feedbacks from the MoSHE/partner institutions and Technical Team members.
* Builds and maintains positive and professional working relationship with co-workers.
* Facilitate benchmarking study tour (up to 10 persons) to countries in East African region,
* Adhere to agreed standards of quality of works and maintain professionalism.
* Deliver the final OS in PDF and editable formats on the specified deadline with maximum quality as per the agreed time frame,
* Must not be engaged in other activities unrelated to the Ministry’s engagements; that affect the project during the consultancy period.

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 occupational standard development, 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 should have proven knowledge of Competency-Based TVET System, OS and AT development, occupational analysis, occupational competency certification system and Knowledge of research methods.

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.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Position \*** | **Key Qualification** | **Experience** |
| 1 | Team Leader | Master /PhD in the TVET fields in one of the priority sectors of EASTRIP | * Minimum of 15 years of professional experience in the field of TVET including working on projects with international funding agencies * Experience as a Team Leader/expert in at least two (2) occupational standard development related projects; * Excellent communication, coordination and facilitation skills |
| 2 | Occupational Standard Development Experts (7)\* | Masters level in the priority sectors with bachelor’s degree or Master’s Degree in each of the following areas:   1. Agro processing 2. Textile and Garment 3. Leather processing 4. Leather goods 5. Automotive 6. Railways engineering 7. Power generation and utility/Electrical Engineering | * Minimum of 15 years of professional experience in the field of TVET and has also very good industry exposure, * Experience in at least two (2) projects as an expert in the field of vocational education and training, including labour market study, * Experience in developing occupational standards and assessment tools is mandatory. * Excellent communication, coordination and facilitation skills * Experience in working in Ethiopia will be an asset |
| 3 | Document editing and quality assurance Expert | Minimum of Bachelor of Arts/Education in English language/literature | * 8 years of relevant experience and strong background in document editing and quality assurance. * Experience in working in Ethiopian TVET system will be an asset |

***\*NB:*** *Following the labour assessment and identification of the 17 occupations, there might be a change on the number OS and AT development experts required.*