



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(CONSULTANCY SERVICES)

Country:	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Name of the Project:	Higher Education Development Program (HEDP)
Implementing Agency:	Ministry of Higher Education
Grant No:	TF 0A0730
Project ID:	P146184
Assignment Title	Consultancy Services for the Third-Party Validation (TPV) of 2019 Enrollment Numbers, Numbers of full-time academic staff & Number of available full-time technical staff (technicians) at ICT centers of Universities
Reference No:	HEDP-C10
Contract Type:	lump Sum
Duration of Assignment:	4.5 months

Background

Afghanistan has an under-developed higher education sector. The gross enrollment rate (GER) in higher education, at about six percent in 2014, is one of the lowest in the world. Among countries comparable to Afghanistan in terms of income per capita and/or geographical proximity, only a few countries such as Burundi, Chad, Eritrea, Gambia and Niger have lower higher education participation rates. Less than two percent of women aged 19-24 years are enrolled in higher education. This is one of the lowest proportions of women participating in higher education world-wide. The percentage of female academic staff members at public universities, at only fourteen percent, is also very small. Therefore, the higher education system needs to expand with a strategic focus on the future economic development of Afghanistan. The country requires a major increase in the number of university graduates to create a modern, well-educated workforce and the pool of qualified academic staff needs to be expanded urgently. In addition, the quality of university and governance of higher education needs to improve urgently and University teaching and learning needs to be modernized. In order to respond to above mentioned needs, MoHE launched a program in 2015 titled "Higher Education Development Program" (HEDP).

The program is a national multi-donor funded, government-led Program supported by World Bank through IDA and ARTF. The overall objective of the HEDP is to "increase access to, and improve the quality and relevance of, higher education in Afghanistan". The HEDP will support the NHESP-II 2015-2020, which aims to develop the higher education sector by expanding enrollment, improving quality, and orienting higher education to promote the future economic and social development of Afghanistan.



TPV Objectives

The objective of this assignment is to facilitate verification of the enrollment numbers (first year's female enrollment and total enrollment at priority disciplines), full time technical staff (technicians of ICT centers at 11 universities) and numbers of full time academic staff with at least a Master's degree in priority degree programs at public universities (excluding Kabul Education University) by 2019 through a technical, independent and third-party validation. The verification will be based on specific priority disciplines. The consultant is required to closely interact with MOHE and the relevant public universities at the national level.

Scope of work and methodology

The scope and extent of the TPV are to verify and validate exact number of students' enrollment as of October 2019 (fall semester of 1398 academic year). The TPV shall trace the exact number of:

1. Female students enrolled in first year of priority degree programs at public universities (annual number).

First year students are those enrolled to the fall semester of 1398 academic year, through the national Kankor examination. The priority degree program disciplines are described in annex I of the ToR;

2. Total enrollment of students enrolled in all classes (class one to class fifth/seventh) of priority degree programs at public universities.

The total enrolment includes all students studying in the priority degree programs, including the students enrolled in the fall semester of 1398.

The TPV firm should randomly validate attendance sheets of fall semester classes of 2019 at priority disciplines and compare the actual enrollment data with the MoHE lists. The Firm should come up with verified data through a technical, independent and scientific method.

3. Numbers of full time academic staff with at least a Master's degree in priority degree programs at public universities and higher education institutes as of March 2020;
4. Number of available full time technical staff (technicians) at ICT centers of 11 universities;

The TPV should ensure that all available full time academic members with at least a master's degree (Master and PhD holders) are counted.

The intended study should help HEDP to;

- Understand the exact number of first year female enrollment at priority disciplines at public universities;
- Understand the exact number of total enrollment of students enrolled at priority disciplines at public universities;
- Understand the exact number of full time academic staff with at least a Master's degree in priority degree programs at public universities and higher education institutes;



- Understand Number of available full time technical staff (technicians) at ICT centers of 11 universities;

The consultant/firm will deliver the following tasks with the specific deliverables:

S.No	Description of task	Expected Deliverables
1	Identify methodology for the implementation of the TPV and develop the verification instruments/survey methods, (e.g. Secondary data source evaluation, verification questionnaire and etc).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Strategy • Data collection tools for all target audience (tools for key informant interviews, questionnaires and etc.)
2	Develop a comprehensive schedule for activities and all associated logistics required for successful completion of the project within the agreed timeline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation plan with timeframe for all required activities.
3	Conduct a secondary study that include Priority discipline lists, MoHE enrolment data, MoHE academic statistic; and other relevant documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief report of the study identifying key areas of focus and fine tuning the overall objectives of the study.
4	<p>The developed methodology, evaluation instruments/data collection tools, activities schedule, defined sample population and analysis of the secondary data should constitute a comprehensive inception report. After the approval of the plan by HEDP management and technical team, the consultant has to carry out the verification study and complete it within the agreed timeline.</p> <p>Note: Inception report can't be deemed as a reference throughout the report. The ToR should be prioritized if anything is not acceptable to HEDP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception Report
6	<p>Prepare a draft final report (In English) with the following elements (but not limited to)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) An Executive summary, b) Methodology c) Result of the analysis according to the terms of reference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First year female enrollment number and a table outlining student's distribution across priority disciplines and universities, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Report



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total enrollment number and a table outlining student's distribution across priority disciplines and universities, ▪ Number of academic members at priority disciplines across public universities and higher education institutes; ▪ A breakdown of academic members across priority disciplines; ▪ Number of full time technical staff (ICT technicians) at 11 universities; <p>d) Problems encountered e) Conclusion f) Recommendation for HEDP g) Annexes presenting the data collection during the Study h) Archive materials: complete survey, questionnaires, interviews and groups meetings documents including the list of interviewees and databases (Excel, SPSS or Access)</p>	
7	Prepare and present a comprehensive final report in English, after incorporation of all the comments and feedback given by the review committee members of MoHE, HEDP and the World Bank.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report

Timeline for activities

The TPV study have to be delivered in three phases in a total duration of **4.5 months**.

I. Phase one, secondary data collection and desk review:

The consultant/consultancy can access appropriate documents and data available with HEDP including Project Implementation Manual (PIM), student's enrollment lists available with MoHE, academic members statistics of MoHE; Program M&E progress reports and any other supporting documents.

This activity is expected to start upon the commencement of the assignment and be completed within **Two weeks**. Using the secondary data, the consultant will provide a complete inception report that would include a detailed plan and methodology on overall project implementation; identify knowledge areas that need clarification; and present methods to be used in data collection. This will also include the presentation and discussion of questionnaires which will be presented as part of the inception report.

The consultant/consultancy will select an appropriate sample size that is statistically significant for the study, wherever applicable. The actual data collection can be performed at the end of secondary data collection.



II. Phase two, field research and primary data collection:

An in-depth TPV study will be conducted to obtain the required information from the targeted key informants, sampled groups and beneficiaries.

The primary data can be collected from each university and faculty's relevant departments. TPV firm will have to check the attendance sheets of the required year (first semester at December 2019 for first year female enrollment at priority disciplines and all classes' s attendance sheets for total enrollment at priority disciplines. The TPV shall also check the current attendance sheets of available academic members with the identifying their academic degree (Master and PhD). The TPV might be required to conduct a survey questionnaire.

The field activities will start after the HEDP approves the inception report and this is estimated to take a maximum **three weeks**.

III. Phase three, data analysis and presentation:

Data entry and analysis will start immediately after the data is compiled from the field and will be completed within **three weeks**. However, the database for the data entry will be developed during the second phase based on the approved questionnaires and data collection tools.

On the completion of the primary data analysis, a preliminary report will be prepared, and the consultant/consultancy has to deliver a presentation on the key findings of the research to HEDP technical staff and management in order to get their feedback and comments. After the incorporation of the comments into the final version of the report. The final presentation will be delivered to key staff of HEDP.

Legal obligations

a) Ownership:

All the outputs/deliverables during the course of implementing the assignment will be the property of HEDP/MoHE. The consultant/consultancy will have no right of claim to the assignment or its outputs once completed. HEDP/MoHE will have exclusive copyright on report/study papers/documents /audio-visual produced as part of this assignment. The consultant/consultancy will not have any claim/rights and will not use or reproduce the contents of the above documents/materials without the written permission of HEDP/MoHE

b) Data protection:

The consultant/consultancy may gain access to data about HEDP's work and internal documents. Consultant/consultancy must keep all such data secure and protected against improper disclosure or use except for the purpose of this particular assignment.

c) Sub-contract.

Consultant/consultancy may not assign or sub-contract its rights and/or obligations to any company or individuals except the prior written consent of HEDP.



d) Field conduct:

The consultant/consultancy must treat all stakeholders and beneficiaries of HEDP with respect irrespective of their age and gender, marital status, religious beliefs, race, ethnic or national origin or any disability they may have.

e) Consultants assigned in negotiations

The consultancy/consultant must make sure that the study is undertaken by the consultants introduced during the negotiation phase. The consultancy/constant has no permission to change the consultants or conduct the assignment other than those introduced in negation phase. Any changes to the team must be communicated with HEDP, in case of emergencies. It still needs the written permission of HEDP at all.

f) Addressing the Comments

During the assignment, HEDP/MoHE and World Bank will have the right to have any kind of comments on the implementing strategies, inception report and the final report. The consultancy has to address all the comments. The assignment will be closed once the World Bank, MoHE/HEDP are satisfied.

ANNEX 1: UPDATED LIST OF PRIORITY DISCIPLINES

The Ministry of Higher Education has clustered its priority disciplines according to ISCED into nine broad areas that are described as following. This is the updated list, which includes three additional disciplines that are identified as “priority disciplines” for the purposes of awarding scholarships for master’s degrees or above.

1. Physical and Life Sciences

Sciences (biology, chemistry and physics), Geology and Earth Science

2. Computing

Computer Science and computer programing

3. Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction

Engineering, construction, electro-mechanics, chemical technology, and mining

4. Health

Pharmacy, general medicine, medical treatment, stomatology, and nursing

5. Environmental Protection

Environment and environmental engineering

6. Agriculture

Agriculture, veterinary forestry, crop and livestock production, agronomy, irrigation, animal husbandry and horticulture

7. Communication and Information Technologies

8. Management and Policy Administration

9. English language and English Literature

10. Economics



Qualification criteria of the Consultancy Firm:

- The Consultant should be registered legal entity and should have been in business for the last 5 years in providing Consultancy Services of similar or related assignments. (The consultant is required to provide the Copy Certificate of Incorporation issued by relevant authority in country of establishment)
- The consultant shall demonstrate having sound financial situation by submitting audited financial reports or any other credible financial documents in which the consultant annual turnover for any of the last three years (2017, 2018 and 2019) shall be **AFN 15,000,000** (Fifteen Million Afghani).
- The consultant shall provide proven experience for a minimum of one contracts with the value of **AFN 8,250,000 (Eight Million and Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Afghani)** having executed during last 5 years of similar nature indicating the duration, value and years of performance, which should showcase the expertise/ strength of the consultant for undertaking such assignments.

The Consultant while describing the assignment(s) should furnish the following details:

- Consultant should explain in what way the executed assignment(s) was/were similar in nature to the current assignment and also indicating the input of key experts provided for the same
- The Consultant should explain the exact role played by the Consultant in the assignment if the assignment was carried out in association with other firms as JV or in sub-consultancy for carrying out the assignment

Requirements for Consultants participating as Joint Venture, Consortium or Association:

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub consultancy to enhance their qualifications. If consultants intend to associate with other firms, they are advised to clearly identify the lead partner and state the composition and nature of their association (JV/ sub-consultant) in their EOI.

In case of association between the firms are in the form of JV, the following requirements will also apply:

- The lead partner is required to be identified clearly and state the composition and nature of their association (JV/ sub-consultant) in their EOI.
- In case of JV, all partners i.e. the lead and JV member/s shall meet 100% of the shortlisting criteria of (a) (b) and (c) above.
- In case of Consultant who intends to associate with other firm(s) in the form of a sub-consultancy, the lead partner shall meet the shortlisting criteria of (a), (b) & (c) above.

Ministry of Higher Education now invites eligible consultants (Consulting Firms) to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants must provide information as below indicating that they are qualified to perform the services; interested consultants must provide



information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.).

Legal References

Eligibility requirements in compliance with paragraphs 3.21, 3.22, & 3.23 of the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Procurement In investment Projects Financing, Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services November 2017 and August 2018. The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Procurement In investment Projects Financing, Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018, setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the following information on conflict of interest related Page 4 of 7 to this assignment as per paragraph 3.16 and 3.17 of World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers available at www.worldbank.org/.

Selection Method

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the selection of Consultants Quality and Cost-based Selection (QCBS) procedures set out in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Procurement In investment Projects Financing, Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018. The Guidelines are available at www.worldbank.org/procure.

Submission of EOI

Expressions of interest as per Annexure 'A' attached must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, by mail, or by e-mail) by **11, July, 2020** at 10:00 a.m. Kabul Local Time Interested Consultancy Firms may obtain further information at the addresses as given below during office hours from *09:00 to 16:00 hours Saturday through Wednesday*.

Attention

Hamed Babak
Procurement Officer
Higher Education Development Program-HEDP-
Ministry of Higher Education
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Annexure 1: Format for Expression of Interest

The expression of interest must be submitted as per the following format: {Note: In case documents submitted are in any language other than English, the consultant should submit a self-certified copy of the translated document in English (along with originals).}

SECTION 1: Organization Details (In case the EOI is being submitted as a Joint Venture, the information has to be submitted for the Lead Partner as well as other members of the Joint Venture separately.)

Part 1: Organization Detail			
I	Name of the Organization		
II	Detail of Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Address of the registered office:Telephone:Facsimile:Website:	
III	Information About Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Year of establishment: (copy the incorporation certificate shall be provide)Status of the Organization: (Public Ltd, Private Ltd, LLP etc.)	
IV	Name and designation of person authorized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Name:Designation:E-mail:Contact Number:	
V	Annual Turnover for the last three financials years	Financial Year	Annual Turnover (Million AFN)
		2017	
		2018	
		2019	
VI	Number of Personal		
Part 2	EOI respondent firm needs to mention its core business areas and any other relevant details/ experience in a descriptive format. EOI Respondent firm needs to mention its Technical and managerial capability for executing the scope of services.		
Please provide a response with detail in not more than 2 pages			



SECTION 2: Documents to be submitted

	Information to be provided	Documentary Evidence to be provided	Page number as part of Annexure
1	The Consultant should be registered legal entity and should have been in business for the last 5 years in providing Consultancy Services of similar or related assignments. (The consultant is required to provide the Copy Certificate of Incorporation issued by relevant authority in country of establishment)	Copy certificate of Incorporation issued by relevant authority in country of establishment	
2	The consultant shall demonstrate having sound financial situation by submitting audited financial reports or any other credible financial documents in which the consultant annual turnover for any of the last three years (2017, 2018 and 2019) shall be AFN 15,000,000 (Fifteen Million Afghani).	Statutory Auditor's certificate (i.e. FY 2017, FY 2018, FY 2019) that provides the information explicitly as per the specific requirement of the criterion. OR Financials statements duly certified by the Chartered Accountant OR Self-certification by the authorized signatory of the EOI mentioning the Annual Turnover for the last three years supported by financial statements or Annual Auditor Reports (for FY 2017, FY 2018, FY 2019) clearly indicating the annual turnover. Please note: The annual turnover quoted must be the annual turnover of the EOI Respondent firm/Lead Partner and not its parent/child company	
3	The consultant shall provide proven experience for a minimum of one contracts with the value of AFN 8,250,000 (Eight Million and Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Afghani) having executed during last 5 years of similar nature indicating the duration, value and years of performance, which should showcase the expertise/strength of the consultant for undertaking such assignments.	Details of the experience should be submitted as per format in Section 3. Please note: The credentials cited under this must have been executed by the EOI Respondent or the Lead/JV partner and not its parent/child company	



4	The details of the Consultant's regional experience if any.	List the Contracts executed with details such as contracts number, the client detail, period of the contract, value of the contract, brief about the assignment etc.	
5	Other relevant documents	<p>I. Declaration that the firm is not black-listed by any Government agencies in Afghanistan</p> <p>II. Declaration that the firm that the information furnished in Eol is correct and for any misrepresentation detected at any stage of selection process or during execution of the resultant contract if successful, the firm to be taken up under the Law of the Land.</p>	

SECTION 3: Format for furnishing details of Credentials / Past Experiences for projects in undertaking related or similar assignment as at Sl. No. 3 of Section 2. The information need to be furnished as per the Format below for each credential.

The project citation should be a maximum of 2 pages per credential/project along with documents as mentioned under Sl. No. 3 of Section 2 (above). The citation need to be furnished for each credential.

Assignment name:	Country: Location within the country
Name of Client:	Address:
Name of the Legal Entity in whose name the contract is:	Duration of assignment (months):
No. of man month of the assignment:	Start date (Month/year): Completion date (Month/year):
Approx. value of the overall contract	Approx. value of the services provided by your firm under the contract (in USD):
Name of associated organizations, if any:	Role of Consortium member:
Narrative description of the Project:	
<p>Detailed Scope of services, coverage of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consultant should explain in what way the executed assignment(s) was/were similar in nature to the current assignment</i> • <i>The Consultant should explain the exact role played by the Consultant in the assignment if the assignment was carried out in association with other firms as JV or in sub-consultancy for carrying out the assignment.</i> • <i>Key-person inputs provided by the Consultant in executing the assignment giving particulars such as qualification and experience of Key staff provided for the assignment (CVs of such key staff are not required to be attached)</i> 	
Relevance of Project to the current scope (i.e. relevant project components in detail)	
Details of the impact of the project for the client:	

SECTION 4: Format for furnishing details of Credentials / Past Experiences cited under Sl. No. 4 of Section 2. The information need to be furnished as per the Format below for each credential.



The project citation should be a maximum of 2 page per credential/project along with documents as mentioned under SI. No. 4 of Section 2 (above). The citation need to be furnished for each credential.

Assignment name:	Country: Location within the country
Name of Client:	Address:
Name of the Legal Entity in whose name the contract is:	Duration of assignment (months):
No. of man month of the assignment:	Start date (Month/year): Completion date (Month/year):
Approx. value of the overall contract	Approx. value of the services provided by your firm under the contract (in USD):
Name of associated organizations, if any:	Role of Consortium member:
Narrative description of the Project:	
Detailed Scope of services, coverage of the project:	
Relevance of Project to the current scope (i.e. relevant project components in detail)	