**Terms of reference for**

**Rapid Needs Assessment for Skills Development in**

**Mazar-I-Sharif**

**1. Background Information**

Afghanistan continues to be one of the world’s largest refugee producing nations, with almost four decades of conflict having produced significant involuntary population movements[[1]](#footnote-1). The country has historically experienced different waves of displacement and return, and the fragile national context is not conducive to sustainable reintegration.

According to ILO estimates, Afghanistan’s unemployment rate of around 30% makes it one of the countries with the highest proportion of job seekers in the world – a situation that will only be exacerbated in the context of large-scale socio-economic shocks from COVID-19[[2]](#footnote-2). Limited access to employment opportunities can result in households pursuing others means of meeting their needs, including negative coping strategies such as child labour, foregoing of educational opportunities and early, forced and child marriage. As noted in a recent paper by the UN University *“the reintegration of returned refugees in a (post-) conflict setting like Afghanistan greatly depends on the ability to access sustainable income-generating activities as a basis of their livelihood”*[[3]](#footnote-3).

While major socio-economic challenges exist for the entire Afghan population, returnees face a particularly difficult situation. Lack of access to education and health services, as well as lack of adequate housing, access to land and access to employment opportunities are all critical issues jeopardizing the success of reintegration[[4]](#footnote-4).

The urgency of the situation cannot be emphasized enough in the current COVID-19 context. In Afghanistan the COVID-19 pandemic presents both health risks and negative subsequent socio-economic consequences of the lockdowns. Returnees from neighbouring countries with high infection rates, primarily Iran, reached new record in March 2020[[5]](#footnote-5). According to IOM, between Jan 1 and April 11, nearly 243,000 people crossed back into Afghanistan from Iran, tens of thousands also returned from Pakistan[[6]](#footnote-6). Returnees are among the high-risk groups afflicted by the present COVID-19 crisis as they have limited access to basic services, especially healthcare, and also face loss of income and livelihoods because of the countrywide lockdown[[7]](#footnote-7). Returnees are also reporting stigmatization from local communities[[8]](#footnote-8).

At the same time, there are opportunities that can be harnessed to create more decent work for all Afghans, including returnees. The youthfulness of the national population (47.7 percent being under 15 years of age) presents a potential dividend for skilling, and self- and waged employment and decent work if it can be realized appropriately. For example, the ILO *Road to Jobs* project has proven that opportunities can be harnessed in *Kamp Sakhi, Ali Abad*, and *Qalin Bafan* around Mazar-e-Sharif, where women returnees have brought with them basic carpet and kilim weaving skills. Around 1,650 women have generated over USD 1,285,000, by partnering with only two carpet exporting companies in 2019. This demonstrates that returnees, and especially women, can become economically productive and utilise the skills, knowledge and experiences they have developed abroad – when given the opportunity.

There is therefore an urgent need for innovative and creative ways of tapping into the entrepreneurial spirit of the majority of Afghans to enable them to participate actively and effectively in a formal economy that rewards their hard work. These new inclusive ways of working have also proven very effective during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Companies have adapted their operations by recruiting independent women returnees who already have the skills and experience in providing quality carpets in a timely manner to safely work from home due to temporarily weaving centre shutdowns. In the current circumstances the likelihood of these alternative modes of production continuing is relatively high, and businesses and workers will need additional support to ensure that product quality and conditions of work remain of the highest standard.

There are opportunities, however, for returnees to reintegrate into society and improve their livelihoods. The majority of returnees – about four out of five – have returned to their province of origin, largely returning because of the presence of family and friends and shelter[[9]](#footnote-9). They also believe that the host community view them in a relatively positive light and fewer than 1% [[10]](#footnote-10) indicated that they experienced ethnic discrimination or disputes with the host community – however, this has reportedly worsened with post-COVID-19 stigmatisation. Thus, returnees have networks that they can potentially leverage in a largely non-hostile environment, which may be indicative that a combination of ‘push’ and ‘pull’ assistance strategies can aid their reintegration.

COVID-19 has triggered a new influx of returnees, principally from Iran[[11]](#footnote-11). For these returnees, the challenges will be considerable. Some have returned voluntarily – albeit unplanned – while others have been deported; arriving back in an economy experiencing its own lockdown with few employment opportunities and a slow recovery ahead.

The ILO now seeks to support the government effort to assess the skills levels of returnees in order to then design interventions which bring the private sector into the host communities as investors opening up opportunities for paid jobs and self-employment.

**2. Purpose, Objectives and scope of the rapid assessment**

**Purpose:**

Assess the skills needs of the affected areas as part of the UN agencies coordinated response to the development needs of the communities and as part of building government capacity.

 ***Objectives***

1. Skills needs and gaps of the currently growing sectors with jobs potential for the host community;
2. Map out existing skills providers for delivering demand driven skills identified by the employers;
3. Identify employers of the selected industry sectors to assess their potential to start apprenticeship or on the-job-training for youth;
4. Assess key challenges faced by the youth, especially women and disadvantaged groups in accessing the skills training.

 ***Scope of the rapid assessment***

1. Identify, rank and prioritize the existing employment intensive sectors (such as construction, furniture, metalwork, carpets and agro food) and occupations, including potential green occupations, in demand in those sectors based on pre-selected criteria agreed with ILO;
2. Identify, rank and prioritize newly emerging skills needs, including green skills, in the sectors impacting both returnees and IDPs and host communities (such as newly planned infrastructure, cooking fuel, waste management and health services);
3. Document profiles of the prioritized sectors in terms of size, skills needs and employment potential;
4. Map the locations where new public infrastructures are being planned and asses the skills needs;
5. Analyze the current gender and diversity focused skills gaps and gaps in skills standards, including soft skills;
6. Identify skills providers in the area and their potential to deliver demand driven skills training with (a) existing classroom facilities, (b) improved classroom facilities, in the occupations identified by the employers;
7. Identify employers in each prioritized sector with potential to initiate ILO’s approach to employer-led apprenticeship training and document their brief profile;
8. Assess the interest of the youth, especially women and other disadvantaged groups, for joining skills training in selected educational institutes and the challenges they face;

**3. Key tasks and deliverables**

***Key tasks***

1. Review the relevant available documents, including the reports and program documents of other agencies related to skills and livelihoods improvements in the host communities and camps carried out by other UN and international agencies.
2. Develop research framework and detailed methodology including questionnaire for the various groups of key informants;
3. Develop a detailed work plan;
4. Develop criteria for selection and ranking the key sectors, occupations and skills needs, including soft skills;
5. Undertake field visits and conduct key informants interviews and Focused Group Discussion with the stakeholders such as business associations, individual employers, key government officials, skills providers (government, private and NGO run institutes), other agencies working on livelihoods, youth groups, schools and colleges;
6. Visit selected training institutes and obtain information on the skills requirements;
7. Visit identified industries to assess the potential of initiating apprenticeship training;
8. Assess challenges specific to women and youth in accessing the skills training;
9. Carry out other tasks as advised by the ILO.

***3.2 Key deliverables***

The main objective of the consultancy services is to prepare a rapid needs assessment for the host communities in Mazar-I-Sharif. Under this overall objective, the Consultant will deliver the following:

1. **Inception Report and Work Plan** which should include assessment methodology, the detailed scope and nature of the work, broad area of focus and issues to be addressed and an outline of the main report.
2. **Draft Report** of the assignmentoutlining:
3. the detailed findings on and profiles of the (i) prioritized currently growing and newly emerging sectors, their skills needs and gaps in supply; (ii) potential skills providers, their capacities to meet employers’ needs and the improvement needs of the training facilities in identified skills institutes;
4. the findings on and the brief profiles of the identified representative employers with potential to introduce apprenticeship training;
5. skills access barriers for women and other disadvantaged communities and recommendations;
6. opportunities and challenges in and way forward to designing and implementing multi-phased employable skills development program in Mazar-I-Sharif with the short terms and long terms measures.

 **(3) Final report** incorporating feedback from ILO, MoLSA and other key stakeholders. ILO will coordinate the comments from all stakeholders and forward to the consultant for submission of the final report.

**Table: Specific Deliverables vs Working days required and Payment Schedule**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/L** | **Specific Deliverables** | **No. of Working days required** | **Payment Schedule in %** |
|  | **Inception Report and Work Plan,** which should include assessment methodology, the detailed scope and nature of the work, broad area of focus and issues to be addressed and an outline of the main report | 02 days | 20% |
|  | **Draft Report** of the assignment outlining the detailed findings based on the agreed work plan | 14 days | 45% |
|  | **Final report** incorporating feedback from ILO and other key stakeholders as decided by ILO. ILO will coordinate the comments from all stakeholders and forward to the consultant for submission of the final report | 02 days | 35% |

**Duration of ExCol Contract:**

The assignment is for 16 working days from the first week of November 2020.

**Completion Criteria**

* All reports to be submitted to the ILO must be relevant to the outputs mentioned in the ToR.
* Provide information and update progress as requested by the ILO.
* The consultant has to follow the guideline of ILO to ensure quality of the reports/ documents.
* The consultant should be proactive, timely report on the progress, and undertake visits to the sites, organize the meetings as and when necessary.
1. **ILO’s Responsibilities**

The ILO will:

1. Monitor and supervise the work of the consultant and review progress of work.
2. Provide technical assistance / feedback as necessary.
3. Provide support for engaging stakeholders and organizing meetings/ FGDs as necessary.
4. Ensure payment of agreed amount based on performance in three tranches.
5. ILO will coordinate the comments from all stakeholders on the draft report and forward to the consultant.
6. Perform any other tasks as described in the contract document.
7. **Special Terms and Conditions**

The documents prepared under this contract are the property of ILO. Therefore, the consultant cannot publish these without permission of the ILO.

**Miscellaneous**

* ***Required Qualifications***

A University Degree; Master Degree/ MPhil or PhD in the relevant field will be an added value.

The assignment will be contracted to a person with demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the issues related to needs assessment of skills development, and who is familiar with TVET/ skills development system of Afghanistan.

* ***More specifically***
1. Minimum 12 years of practical experience in the area of social development, especially with TVET/ skills projects engaging relevant stakeholders in skills and employment.
2. Excellent interpersonal skills, analytical skills and facilitation skills for seminar/ workshop with high profile professionals.
3. Excellent working knowledge of English and Dari and Pashto, and computer literacy.
4. Working experience with ILO or any UN / international agency will be an advantage.
5. Excellent networking ability with the stakeholders including government agencies, industries, NGOs, private training organizations, etc.
6. Ability to work in a multicultural environment.
7. Gender-sensitive behavior and attitudes.
* ***Payment terms:***

Fees are commensurate to the consultant’s qualifications and experience as well as previous applicable rates for similar assignment. Terms and conditions will be as per the ILO rules and procedures for the purpose.

* ***Evaluation Criteria and Score:***

The selection process will include preliminary shortlisting based on the criteria set for technical evaluation. The final selection of the Consultant will be made based on the cumulative score on technical evaluation and score on financial proposal. The technical evaluation will carry 70% of the total score, while financial evaluation will be for 30% of the total score.

The qualifying marks of the technical evaluation will be 70%, i.e., 49, out of 70. Only the technically qualified bidders will be evaluated for the financial proposals.

**Submission of Application:**

The interested candidates are requested to submit their application with a motivation letter mentioning the daily fee, other expenses and a full curriculum vitae electronically to manoto@ilo.org addressed to Mr. Tonderai Manoto, Project Manager, R2DJ4All Project.

**Last date for submission of technical & financial proposals: 3 November 2020**

The ILO promotes equal opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive employment in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

1. According to UNHCR there are almost 2.5 million registered refugees from Afghanistan. They comprise the largest protracted refugee population in Asia, and the second largest refugee population in the world [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://tolonews.com/business/afghanistan-has-highest-unemployed-work-force-ilo> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s11187-019-00315-w.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/64059> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. IOM, Return of Undocumented Afghans, weekly situation report, https://afghanistan.iom.int/sites/default/files/Reports/iom\_afghanistan-return\_of\_undocumented\_afghans-\_situation\_report\_08-14\_march\_2020.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Global Protection Cluster, AFGHANISTAN: COVID-19 SITUATION REPORT 05 May 2020, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Reporte\_11.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. IOM, Coronavirus threatens to push Afghan Returnees into Deeper Poverty, https://afghanistan.iom.int/feature-stories/coronavirus-threatens-push-afghan-returnees-deeper-poverty [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Global Protection Cluster, AFGHANISTAN: COVID-19 SITUATION REPORT 05 May 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Reporte_11.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Afghanistan braces for coronavirus surge as migrants pour back from Iran*. The Guardian. April 1, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)