MALDIVES: ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY AND RESILIENCE OF YOUTH PROJECT (MEERY: P163818)

Ministry of Higher Education

Republic of Maldives

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

FOR

Consultant to Conduct a Comprehensive Training Needs Analysis of the Agriculture Sector of Maldives

(Procurement Ref: MV-MOHE-210937-CS-INDV)

1. Background

Several aspects of the Maldives' recent development pattern highlight imbalances between labor demand and supply. Public sector jobs are predominantly in the civil service with the rapid expansion of cadres in the 1990s and 2000s. However, with the increasing standard of living over time, the labor market has become more challenging for Maldivians in general. Increasing educational attainment among the younger generation and expectations have coincided/collided with the rapid growth in low-skill service jobs associated with tourism and construction, leading to a mismatch in skills supply and demand. Despite the high levels of growth and labor market conditions in public investments, tourism, fisheries and non-tradable tourism related activities, important challenges remain for young Maldivians. These relate to (i) the need for greater inclusion and productive employment for youth, especially for those who cannot rely on public sector jobs (because of a sharp reduction of public sector employment) or who are from the most vulnerable segments of the population; and (ii) an increasing reliance on foreign labor in important sectors such as tourism and construction services and limited opportunities for women.

The Government of Maldives (GoM) is implementing the "Maldives: Enhancing Employability and Resilience of Youth (MEERY)" Project. The project is funded by the World Bank. The objective of the project is to improve the relevance of technical and vocational skills and foster entrepreneurship to promote youth employment in priority sectors. The project is being administered by the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), with a Project Steering Committee that will be co- chaired by the MoHE and the Ministry of Economic Development.

The project comprises three components and a Contingent Emergency Component. The three primary components are;

Component 1: **Fostering skills development and entrepreneurship in priority sectors (Tourism & Construction and ICT-related Services Sectors through four sub-components:**

1.1: Labor-market assessment and analysis for demand driven skills identification
1.2: Revision of Skills Development (TVET and Entrepreneurship) Curriculum
1.3: Face-to-Face Skills Delivery.
1.4: Support for Entrepreneurship Development.

Component 2: **Promoting entrepreneurship and employment through skills Development and *e*Learning Strategy through three sub-components:**
2.1: Strategy Development, Strengthening and Diversifying skills development programs.
2.2: IT infrastructure for skills development and jobs platform.
2.3: Career hubs for education-industry linkages.

 Component 3: **Project Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation**

2. Introduction to the Assignment

In 2018, Maldives observed an unemployment rate of 6.1%, the highest in South Asia, according to statistics published by Asian Development Bank. With the demand for Higher Education expected to rise over the next five years, there is a need to ensure that efforts to increase enrollment in Higher Education is well-planned to tackle the issue of skills mismatch in the country. It is also believed that unemployment rates vary by region, based on regional strengths, available opportunities and job seeker presence. However, we have insufficient data at the moment to identify these regional variations.

There is also a large percentage of both skilled and unskilled foreign workers employed in the identified sectors. Without extensive research on sector needs, locals cannot be trained to replace them. While efforts have been made to solve this problem by providing scholarships and loans for specific fields of study, there is insufficient data to guide policy makers, for example, on how many slots are needed at which levels of study.

Thus, there is a need for a more localized region-based assessment of training needs, assessment of the skills mismatch based on labor supply, employment demands and changing economic contexts. Such a comprehensive assessment, inclusive of public and private sector labour market needs, economic growth projections and development initiatives of the Government, would be essential to ensure that academic and labor development planning in institutions is guided by relevant data.

Agriculture related training was incorporated into the MEERY project on request from the Ministry of Economic Development to align the outputs of the project with the larger plans of the Government of Maldives. In this regard, it was recommended that a study on the current market context of agricultural employment in the Maldives be scoped and understood prior to finalizing the specificities of the planned trainings. In this regard, it was decided that a Training Needs Assessment for this industry be conducted.

Data regarding employment in agriculture sector is scarce, as the sector; while a major economic sector, greatly functions as a grey economy.

The consultant selected for this assignment will receive policy directions from the Ministry of Economic Development and the Project PMU.

3. Objectives

- Conduct a comprehensive region-specific training needs and the skills mismatch analysis based on regional demand and supply, sectoral growth projections and regional and national priorities to develop quantitative data for the agriculture sector that can assist in data-driven policy planning.
- To determine the skills, knowledge and attitude requirements of individuals working in the agriculture related jobs.
- Conduct training based on labor market needs and provide recommendations on how future studies can be conducted internally.

4. Scope of Services

The tasks include, but are not limited to, the following:

Inception Report
- Prepare an inception report before commencing the research study. Design and document the detailed methodology for the study i.e.
  - main research methods,
  - sampling framework,
  - questionnaires and other documents needed for research activities.
  - proposed sources of data, including collection of primary data.
  - procedures for data collection and analysis on the demand and supply gaps in the labor market for the mentioned sector.
- Data Collection and Research Conduct an initial review to establish what data is currently available and where the gaps exist in consultation with MoHE and MED.
- Propose a design, process and detailed plan for conducting the training need analysis including timeline (both for pilot regions and nationwide).
- Select the target audience for data collection.
- Develop and administer questionnaires and other documents needed for research activities
- Organize effective focus groups and compile findings.
- Conduct background research and prepare other relevant documents to facilitate the data collection process.

Presentation of Findings

- Analyze comprehensive data (including training levels for identified Higher Education and TVET programmes).

- Prepare, present and discuss findings of the analysis at interim meetings with the Technical Panel.
- Prepare the structure of the final report.
- Prepare and present the first draft of the final report.
- Produce a final comprehensive TNA report.

Final Report

The final TNA will include a report that will include answers, but is not limited, to the following:

- The jobs exist now and which jobs can we expect will come in the future.
- Cluster and Classify all agriculture occupations/jobs into different skill levels such as unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled, supervisory and managerial level.
- The skill, knowledge and attitude gaps between supply and demand for labour in the agriculture sector.
- The possible causes of those gaps.
- The extent that locals are available and willing to undertake works pertaining to Agriculture.
- The skills and competencies that are required and the skills that are currently available.
- A gap analysis for training in the agriculture sector.
- Identification of training priorities and importance.
- Recommendations for training on aspects such as participants, methods, modules and curriculum.
- Suggestions to improve methodology for next TNA.

The final report will include recommendations for the following:

- Based on the findings of the study, recommend the frequency through which future studies should be conducted.
- Based on the findings of the study, recommend a 5-year training plan to develop a strong local labour force for the agriculture sector with the following in consideration:
  - The number of workers to be trained per atoll in by occupation.
  - The number of Qualified Trainers who would in turn be the driving force to enhance the workforce.
  - The rationale used for allocation.

5. Deliverables

- Comprehensive training needs analysis report.
- Cleaned data from the survey responses.
- Final report including recommendations based on the TNA.
- The cleaned data collected through the survey responses must be shared with the PMU. and the Ministry of Economic Development.

6. Qualifications and Experience

In order to successfully carry out the tasks listed above, the consultant is required to have the following qualifications and experience:

- The candidate must have at least a Master's Degree in Agriculture or Industrial Economics or Labour Economics or Industrial Economics or Environmental Economics or Resource Economics or Statistics, Data science or other relevant discipline;
- The candidate must have at least 3 years of experience in Industrial Research or Agriculture or operations for complex projects;
- The candidate must t have experience working with different government units and agencies, and familiarity with relevant government procedures and regulations in the Maldives;
- Extensive experience in the agricultural sector would be an added advantage.

7. Other Competencies

In addition to the required qualifications and experience, consultant is required to have the following competencies:
- Strong organization, co-ordination and teamwork skills.
- Strong client orientation and skills in promoting stakeholders' participation in the project.
- Skills in providing information that lead to the development labor market policies and strategies.
- Skills in developing labor market policies.
- Proven capacity to supervise and coordinate all administrative and technical aspects of the consultancy.
- Demonstrate local knowledge on labor market, trends and culture.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English, and the ability to prepare high quality reports in English.
- Proficiency in the use of MS Office Suite (Word, PowerPoint, Excel), basic statistical software
- Ability to communicate via email and conduct research on the internet.

8. Institutional Arrangements

Consultant will work at a place as agreed by both parties.

9. Duration of services and terms of payment

The service is for a period of three months.

The consultant will be hired as a specialist/consultant under the project and will be paid in accordance with the agreed rate upon completion of the outputs specified in the TOR and the contract.