**Skills Development for a Modern Economy Project (SDMEP)**

**Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MOELR) of the Republic of Uzbekistan**

**Terms of Reference**

**PIU MOELR Procurement Specialist (48 months)**

1. **Introduction (Objective and Purpose of the Assignment)**
2. Investing in human capital to enable private sector growth and improve the country competitiveness is the Government of Uzbekistan’s top priority. The government plans to implement employment programs to ensure employment of higher and secondary specialized educational graduates and organize training for workforce development. The technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector reform aims to develop market-relevant skills, through institutional changes. The Education Sector Plan (2019–2023) stresses the importance of matching skills development with the demand of employers through effective partnership between TVET and industries.
3. The proposed Skills Development for a Modern Economy Project (SDMEP) will support improved availability of workers with market-relevant skills. The SDEMP will directly benefit at least 10,000 TVET students, 48,000 jobseekers (including 500 people with disabilities [PWDs]), 600 specialized teachers/trainers and 100 management and staff from the selected professional training centers (PTCs) and technical and vocational educational institutions (TVEIs), 1,200 public employment service (PES) staff, 210 PES management, and government officials, among others. It will also benefit the industries seeking skilled workers, other colleges seeking new training methods and materials, and people seeking recognition of prior learning.
4. The project is aligned with the following impact: employment level of the population, particularly for youth, increased.[[1]](#footnote-1) The project will have the following outcome: market-relevant skills learned by students and job seekers. The project’s planned outputs are as below.
5. **Output 1: Employment and workforce development services improved.** This output will improve the access to and quality of training and job placement services for job seekers, with a special focus on youth and women. At least 48,000 unemployed job seekers will be reskilled at competency levels 2–3 in the priority trades, including agribusiness and food processing, construction, ICT, textiles and garments, and machinery repair and maintenance (i.e., agro-machines, automobiles, and home appliances), including 500 PWD in relevant fields.[[2]](#footnote-2) It will support (i) improving PES capacities for job matching and referral to reskilling services; (ii) updating training equipment for the MOELR’s staff training center, and developing training programs and materials for various training methods, including e-learning; (iii) launching social mobilization activities to promote the access to skills development and PESs, especially for youth, women in nontraditional areas, and MSEs; (iv) updating 14 selected PTCs by providing advanced equipment and upgrading training infrastructure with gender- and PWD-inclusive and energy-saving facilities, including alternative energy provision (solar panels); and (v) setting up two assessment centers meeting competency-based training (CBT) requirements with certified master assessors.[[3]](#footnote-3) This output will adopt the curricula and training materials developed (at certificate level) under output 2, including the essential entrepreneurship training, and facilitate the short-term work-based learning for the trainees. It will also benefit returning migrants who pursue reskilling or recognition of prior learning in the target domains.
6. **Output 2: Quality and relevance of skills development enhanced.** This output will improve the quality and industry relevance of skills development in the priority trades. It is estimated that at least 10,000 TVET students will be enrolled for skilling at competency levels 3–4.[[4]](#footnote-4) Partnerships with industry will play a critical role in curriculum development, work-based training, and developing and delivering entrepreneurship training. This output will support (i) upgrading six TVEIs’ training facilities and turning them into resource centers as change-makers for CBT;[[5]](#footnote-5) (ii) developing and providing for targeted skills areas the certificate- and diploma-level gender-inclusive CBT curricula, modularized training programs, and teaching and learning materials, including e-materials (online and offline); (iii) strengthening the Institute of Pedagogical Innovations, Retraining and Advanced Training of Leading and Pedagogical Personnel of Vocational Education (Institute of Retraining of Pedagogical Personnel under the MHSSE) for updating teachers’ competency requirements and needs-based development plan, and adopting an e-learning platform; (iv) improving PTC and TVEI specialized teachers and trainers, especially in their technical and professional skills and practical training of TVET students; (v) updating entrepreneurship training; (vi) providing gender-fair career guidance and soft skills training for TVET students; (vii) partnering with internationally well-established skills development institutions for training of trainers, assessment, and certification; and (viii) establishing a web-based integrated TVET management information system for evidence-based planning. The TVET management information system will be implemented under the project before evaluation by the government for any rollout.
7. **Output 3: Sector governance and management strengthened.** This output will support the skills development sector governance by (i) strengthening SSCs and sector skills working groups (SSWGs) for the priority trades to enhance the linkages between industries and skills development systematically; (ii) updating occupational competency standards in targeted areas and sector qualification frameworks for the selected trades to improve the applicability, in line with industry practice; (iii) supporting the NSCELP on labor market information monitoring, analysis, and reporting, with national skills gap surveys conducted to inform the evolving demand for skills and guide the plan for training needs; (iv) strengthening the capacity of the national skills competition under the WorldSkills standards; and (v) enhancing the capacity for the development of distance learning materials in the targeted areas and providing basic personal protection products at the targeted PTCs and TVEIs to ensure skills development service continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic. The SSWGs and SSCs will provide the institutional force to ensure that industry needs are reflected in skills development and lead in any further review for updating the training programs. To supplement the skills gap surveys, tracer studies will be done for the project-involved PTC and TVEI graduates to assess their employability and inform in-time responses for improving the quality of skills development.
8. The SDMEP will be financed by the Asian Development Bank and the Government of Uzbekistan. It will be led by the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MOELR) and implemented also with the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education (MHSSE), for a period of 6 years from December 2020 to December 2026, to improve skills development to promote job creation and economic growth in a more efficient labor market, with a particular emphasis on youth. MOELR will be the Executing Agency (EA) and responsible for overall reporting on all project activities and ensuring that the project is implemented in accordance with the Loan Agreement. The Project Director will be the First Deputy Minister of MOELR. MOELR and MHSSE will be the implementing agencies, with responsibility for implementation of investment activities under the project and will report on the progress of their respective project activities. As for the project scope, output 1 and 3 will be implemented by MOELR and output 2 will be implemented by MHSSE.
9. MOELR and MHSSE will each establish a PIU with full-time staff. The PIUs will be responsible for day-to-day implementation of the project. The PIU under the MOELR (PIU MOELR) will act as the coordinating PIU responsible for overall project management and compiling annual project progress reports and quarterly progress reports. The PIU MOELR will support the implementation of the project activities specifically related to and/or assigned under MOELR (outputs 1 and 3) and take charge of project coordination by coordinating with the other PIU (under MHSSE). The PIU under MHSSE (PIU MHSSE) will support the implementation of the project activities specifically related to and/or assigned under MHSSE (output 2). Both PIUs will respectively prepare quarterly project physical and financial progress reports, unaudited quarterly project financial statements, and annual audited project financial statements. The PIU MOELR will be responsible for consolidating the project progress reports and submitting them for reporting to ADB and the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
10. The project will finance equipment, reconstruction and renovation of 14 professional training centers (PTCs) under MOELR, and 6 technical and vocational educational institutions (TVEIs) under MHSSE, and provide equipment to the MOELR’s staff training center, National Scientific Center for Employment and Labor Protection, and MHSSE’s Institute for Retraining Pedagogical Personnel. The project will also finance consulting and non-consulting services.
11. **Scope of Services**

Under the leadership of the PIU Manager the Procurement Specialist will be provided overall guidance and support for project implementation with respect to procurement activities and contract management following the provisions in the Loan Agreements and instructions in the Project Administration Manual.

Procurement Specialist will work closely with the Procurement Consultants from the Project Implementation Support Firm (PISF). The Procurement Specialist is required to learn ADB’s Procurement Accreditation Skills Scheme (PASS) e-learning materials and modules to provide him/her with skills and knowledge to undertake works, goods, consulting and non-consulting service procurement, review the project’s procurement transactions and oversee the IA’s and EA’s activities.

PIU Procurement Specialist will report to the PIU Manager.

1. **Detailed Tasks and/or Expected Outcomes**

Procurement Specialist will:

1. Coordinate with and assist the Procurement Consultants of PISF in carrying out the latter’s duties and responsibilities;
2. Facilitate the PISF Procurement Consultants preparation of the project procurement management manual and implement the manual during project implementation;
3. Implement all requirements of Government and the ADB as specified in ADB documentation;
4. Establish the Procurement Working Group and other committees as required by Government and the ADB;
5. Coordinate the development of TORs for consultants, technical specifications for civil works and goods procurement;
6. Support the MOELR to engage the single-contracted authority under each relevant hokimiyat for handling the civil works through sub-contracting the constructors and providing routine supervision;
7. Organize timely (quarterly) the plan for the needed consumables from the PTCs and conduct the relevant procurement of the consumables;
8. Prepare bidding documents, international and national advertising;
9. Prepare papers and recommendations for the Procurement Committee as required;
10. Conduct research to ascertain the best products and suppliers in terms of best value, delivery schedules and quality;
11. Liaise between suppliers, manufacturers, relevant areas of the project;
12. Identify potential suppliers, visiting existing suppliers, and building and maintaining good relationships with them;
13. Facilitate negotiations and agreeing contracts and monitoring their progress, checking the quality of service provided;
14. Facilitate processing of payments and invoices;
15. Keep contract files and using them as reference for the future;
16. Forecast price trends and their impact on future activities;
17. Produce reports and statistics according ADB’s requirements using computer software;
18. Assist in evaluating bids and making recommendations based on commercial and technical factors;
19. Ensure suppliers are aware of project objectives;
20. Update the procurement plan;
21. Attend meetings and reporting as required; and
22. Undertake other tasks related to procurement and consulting services as deemed necessary activities.
23. **Minimal Qualification Requirements** 
    * Education in commerce, business administration, finance, economics, engineering or other relevant fields. Master degree or post-graduate degree or specific training in procurement will be an advantage;
    * General work experience in public or private or other relevant sectors at least 10 years;
    * Professional experience (at least 5 years) in/with international organizations, projects or organizations financed by international donors (WB, ADB, etc.);
    * Specific experience in procurement (at least 3 years or 1 project);
    * Fluent in Russian and/or Uzbek communication skills (written and spoken). Good written and spoken English will be an advantage.
    * Good computer skills, all Microsoft office applications.

**E. Deliverables**

1. The PIU Procurement Specialist is responsible for in-time procurement subject to the procurement requirements. He/she should comply with the requirements of ADB and legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan for carrying out the work assignments. Meanwhile, he/she is coordinating the in-time quality outputs from the equipment consultants and procurement consultants in PISF and from the construction design and quality monitoring firm, in-time delivery of the required supplies from the suppliers, and in-time hand-over of the renovated/reconstructed PTCs.
2. The PIU Procurement Specialist will also support the ADB mission to prepare the following reports:
3. Periodical review reports;
4. Mid-term review report; and
5. Project completion report.

**E. Working Arrangement**

1. The PIU Procurement Specialist will work at the PIU office provided by the IA at Tashkent City. Travel to regions will be required under normal circumstances with clearance from COVID-19. Under COVID-19, any travel to regions, if needed, will have to comply with the local regulations.

**F. Assignment Duration**

1. The engagement will be for 48 months. The engagement will be focused on the earlier years of the project when procurement activities are concentrated and then will span into the remaining period of the project. First three months will be a probation period.

1. Action Strategy for the Five Priority Areas of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2017–2021 in Presidential Decree No. 4947. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. PTCs target skill levels 2–3 benchmarked at the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). These will be made in line with the equivalent levels as in the NQF, which was developed by the government by taking reference of the EQF and other countries’ qualification framework. Training for PWDs will be held at Samarkand Bogishamol “Welcome to Job” Center; and will focus on ICT, textiles and garments (pattern design and sewing), and home appliance repair and maintenance. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The assessment centers will be accommodated at Tashkent City “Welcome to Job” Center and Samarkand Bogishamol “Welcome to Job” Center. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Professional schools target skill level 3 and *technikums* target skill level 4, benchmarked at the EQF. These will be updated to equivalent levels in line with the NQF. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The facilities include advanced equipment, and renovation and reconstruction with gender- and PWD-inclusive and energy-saving infrastructure, including alternative energy provision (solar panels). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)