

Terms of Reference

International consultant to support the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development in drafting a National Skills policy, a National Skills Development plan and a monitoring framework based on a technical assessment of TVET system and the ongoing skills reform initiatives to analyze policy implications and the policy directions needed to provide guidance on the strategic vision for skills development over the next 7 years at the national, sector and regional level in line with Vision2030 and HCDP 2021-25.

Duty Station: Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and home-based. The assignment takes place for 15 w/days in Riyadh (two missions) and a total of 45 home-based days.

Language required: English, Arabic is a plus

Duration of the ex-col contract: 60 working days over a period of 7 months (tentatively the assignment will be started from August 2023 but the date will be finalized after completion of recruitment process).

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Project: | Supporting the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development in analysis, policy and capacity development (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) |
| Project Outcome 4: | Improved skills governance for better employability and employment outcomes in KSA |
| Outputs: | 04.04: Skills policy and action plan developed for KSA |

Introduction

In 2016, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia developed its Vision 2030¹ based on three integrated pillars including a vital society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation to achieve the objective of the kingdom to be a pioneering and successful global model of excellence.

Towards a thriving economy, the Kingdom set several strategic goals focusing on boosting equal access to economic opportunities and improving business productivity and diversification that contribute to economic growth. To further this potential, the Kingdom is seeking to develop a life-long learning culture that enhances recognition of skills and competence, provides equal opportunities for all including youth, adults, women and persons with disabilities and helps them gain the necessary skills to achieve their personal goals. Additionally, the Kingdom is also working to reinforce the ability of the economy to generate diverse job opportunities and attract local and global talents and qualified people. This will be achieved by increasing SME's contribution to GDP through supporting SME entrepreneurship, privatization of some government services and investments in new industries. The Kingdom will improve its business environment, restructure economic cities, create special zones and deregulate the energy market to make it more competitive.

While oil and gas are essential pillars of the economy, the Kingdom has begun to expand its investments into new sectors and other resources in order to diversify the economy and unleash the capabilities of other promising economic sectors that will ensure the sustainability of the kingdom's economy. In addition to energy, new sectors in focus include digital, wholesale and retail, tourism and hospitality, security, culture and leisure, real estate and development services, logistics and transportation services, transformative industries, mining, renewable energy, health, financial and insurance services, and technical services. Furthermore, the kingdom is aiming to maximise the benefits of its strategic geographic location to increase its exports and re-exports by establishing new local and international partnerships with the private sector putting the Kingdom on a distinctive international trade gateway to Asia, Europe and Africa.

Flowing from this Vision, the KSA has prioritized workforce development to steer the country towards a more productive and knowledge economy. For that, it has developed strategies and interventions such as the Human Capability Development Program (HCDP)² and the Labour Market Strategy (LMS) to promote skills development. The HCDP is a

¹ [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 \(my.gov.sa\)](https://my.gov.sa)

² [Human Capability Development Program - Vision 2030](#)

large-scale Vision 2030 program that aims to ensure that citizens have the required capabilities to compete globally by instilling values and developing basic and future skills, as well as enhancing knowledge. The program focuses on developing a solid educational base for all citizens to instil values from an early age, while preparing the youth for the future local and global labour market. It also focuses on upskilling citizens by providing lifelong learning opportunities, supporting innovation and entrepreneurship culture, and developing and activating policies and enablers to ensure KSA competitiveness. The LMS is the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development's (MHRSD) strategy to improve employment outcomes in the Kingdom including through developing skills and capabilities. It includes 25 initiatives that serve to promote national employment, increase participation and inclusion, improve productivity and performance, and balance the labor market in terms of supply and demand. Relevant to skills development, in particular, the LMS emphasis is on training policies and programs, pursuing career growth, developing human capital in collaboration with education and training authorities, and an increased focus on skills and occupational planning, which includes establishing sector skills councils and professional standards.

Skills bottlenecks in diversification, equitable growth, and future of work

The Saudi labour market faces several challenges that hinders full employment and productivity and fulfillment of Vision 2030. The labour market is characterized by high reliance on foreign labour and high unemployment across key segments. According to World bank research 2021, 67% of the workforce is foreign with the majority from Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. Unemployment rate among youth stood at 16% while women participation in the labour force was 35%. The labour force participation of Saudi nationals in the private sector is low compared to a 45% employment rate in the public sector resulting in a decreased labour productivity that is further affected by low investment in skilling the labor force and adult learning. 93% of the unemployed Saudi nationals never participated in skills training³.

There is skills mismatch between the supply and demand as a result of disconnection between education, training and local and regional labour market needs, in addition to lack of matching mechanism. 35% of Saudi nationals are underqualified for the position they hold while 30% of TVET graduates are not working in the field of their studies. The labor market also has a higher proportion of lower-level skills than comparable countries. Low-skill occupations comprise around two thirds of the labor market, while only 24% are high-skilled. Saudi workers primarily work in occupations that are intensive in non-routine cognitive skills, while non-Saudi workers carry out routine and manual work. The country's reliance on natural resources as a main source of income and bringing in foreign labor has resulted in a neglected focus on skills development and diversification of employment for Saudi nationals – factors that are explicitly brought to focus in the KSA's Vision 2030.

The high probability of job automation, overproduction of students in humanities and social sciences, and the need for innovation to stimulate the private sector highlight the importance of investment in the development of science and technology, particularly Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills. Additionally, responding to global drivers of change such as digital advancements in the workplace, technology and innovation, climate change, globalization and trade, demography, mobility, work organization, and educational attainment require investment in skills and relevant development strategies. This has been further confirmed following the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are multiple active players involved in the national skills agenda for planning, development, recognition, and management but no mandated skills custodian or defined governance mechanism to steer the system on national level. While a range of successful innovative initiatives, including Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs) and supporting policies have been implemented, however, there is lack of an overarching National Skills Policy with clear strategic plan for implementation that synthesizes efforts towards collective goals, as well as a lack of monitoring and evaluation of programs have resulted in a fragmented approach to addressing vital skills development needs.

Complementing these national efforts, the Kingdom is currently developing a skills strategy for a more systemic approach to support the national drive and development priorities. In alignment with the HCDP and LMS strategies, the skills strategy interventions focus on good governance, coordination and financing of the skills development system between different key stakeholders including the private sector, coordinated quality assurance system, an integrated labour market information system, more work-integrated learning and public private partnership, inclusive and responsive education and training system.

³ World Bank Skills pillar 3LMS (MLSD & World Bank), skills strategy document

Within the above context and vision, the ILO, in collaboration and consultation with the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development including other stakeholders and development partners, is supporting the development of a National Skills and Life-Long Learning Policy for the future of work and realization of this vision 2030. The development work also includes a national skills plan and skills monitoring system to ensure effective implementation of the policy.

As a first step, the ILO will conduct a technical review on skills and life-long learning development system to analyze policy implications and policy directions and provide guidance on the strategic vision for skills development over the next 7 years at the national, sector and regional level. The review will also serve to set out key constraints and needs as well as priority areas for reform taking into consideration an appropriate management and governance system for national and sector-wide coordination of all parties involved in education and training, and linkages with other development strategies in the country. The technical review results will be analyzed and form a benchmark study on skills status in Saudi Arabia.

As such the technical review will look into the skills strategy, the HCDP, and the LMS and other relevant strategies to identify areas of gaps, complementarity and/or other areas that need strengthening; and to generate expert views and recommendations for the MHRSD to take into consideration. For a comprehensive review, globally acknowledged tools such as ILO international standards and recommendations⁴, ILO skills systems assessment tool⁵, ILO policy brief on formulating a national policy on skills development⁶, UNESCO TVET policy review guideline, and other tools are expected to be applied to provide up-to-date information about the socio-economic context of TVET, its characteristics and priorities, as well as an overall assessment of the complexity in governance arrangements and delivery characteristics. As efforts are made to improve the quality, equity and accountability of TVET to its main users, it is important that the reviews also take into account of everyday reality and stakeholder perceptions as the basis for any policy recommendation. This review will eventually contribute to a better understanding of TVET in the Saudi socio-economic context and provide recommendations for ensuring coherent policy environment for programmes to operate, thrive and benefit their targeted beneficiaries to a greater extent. The work will be complemented with technical guidance on the overall process to MHRSD units and members, and where relevant other key stakeholders for the purpose of knowledge transfer and support the role of the Ministry in implementing and monitoring the national skills policy plan. This ToR is, therefore, the basis of the assignment of an international consultant with the objectives mentioned in the subsequent section.

Objective

The key objectives of the assignment are:

- Identify gaps in the current skills ecosystem to benchmark the current status of skills and lifelong learning system in KSA, based on a review of the skills strategy, skills governance, and skills financing and with a focus on TVET. This is to be done through an extensive technical assessment to analyze policy implications for skills and life-long learning in the context of the future of work and Vision 2030 and to feed into the skills benchmark study.
- Examine key policy directions based on the above assessment and by analyzing ongoing skills reform initiatives, country's policy priorities and relevant sector policies linked with country's economic growth and employment, including nationalization of labour market, migration, and young people's transition to decent jobs
- Prepare draft National Skills and Lifelong Learning policy under the guidance of the ILO and the MHRSD and seek validation from the key stakeholders to ensure a clear way forward for demand driven, flexible and responsible training provision and lifelong career guidance, nationally recognized qualifications, competency-based training, and assessment, structured private sector engagement in skills governance and skills delivery, decentralized and outcome-based skills planning and financing, promotion of workplace learning and recognition of prior learning
- Finalize National Skills and Lifelong Learning Policy document along with nation skills plan for implementing the policy and monitoring framework to assess the policy impact.
- Facilitate two one-day workshops for knowledge transfer to MHRSD on the overall process required for the development of the skills and life-long learning policy, and the skills plan and monitoring system, including discussion on capacity needed at the Ministry for future monitoring role
- .

⁴ See section methodology – literature review

⁵ [ILO Skills System Assessment Tool](#)

⁶ [Skills for Employment Policy Brief - Formulating a national policy on skills development \(ilo.org\)](#)

Key responsibilities to be performed

Scope of work

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Senior Skills Specialist and with the technical support of the National Technical Officer on Skills, to complete the following:

- a. Conduct two days orientation/training workshop on policy development process to MHRSD. The first workshop at the beginning of the assignment addressing the overall planned process (who, what, and how). The second at the end of the assignment focusing on the capacity required for the implementation and monitoring process.
- b. Analyse the national socio-economic context, economic growth incentives and the Country's Vision 2030 for knowledge-based economy with a focus on labour market trends and the imperatives and the expectations that arise for TVET, including from the perspective of the emerging changes in technology and other trends in future of work.
- c. Analyse the past and ongoing initiatives of TVET reforms, ensuing process of change, the management of change process and the internal and external factors facilitating or constraining adaptation and change.
- d. Analyse the relevant national policies, policy coordination and coherence to identify gaps and likely effect on the proposed National Skills Policy.
- e. Based on secondary desk review but also in-country consultations with relevant tripartite constituents in KSA, conduct a technical assessment of skills governance, skills financing (including scope for decentralized and outcome-based planning and budgeting), and efficiency of skills delivery system⁷ with a focus on TVET to identify gaps and identify policy directions needed for coherence and alignment with country's policy priorities and global drivers of change impacting future of work
- f. Examine the quality and effectiveness of current skills system, particularly TVET, to equip the graduates with the knowledge and skills needed in for labour market within and outside the country, and for further learning.
- g. Examine current practices to promote inclusion and access with a focus on gender and disability issues, identify challenges and good practices to provide policy directions and measures to ensure inclusion in consultations with the ministry and other stakeholders
- h. Assess the current practice of skills testing and recognition of those nationals and expatriates who acquire skills at the workplace to provide policy directions and mechanisms for improvement.
- i. Based on conclusions drawn from above diagnostics, draft National skills Policy in close coordination with MHRSD and ensure alignment of the proposed policy directions with country's policy priorities and ongoing skills reform initiatives.
- j. Seek validation from relevant stakeholders, particularly other relevant ministries, institutions and social partners
- k. Finalize National Skills Policy Document and make submission for its adoption by the Ministry
- l. Develop National Skills and Lifelong Learning Development plan for implementation of the policy in consultation with MHRSD
- m. Develop Monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress of policy implementation and policy impact
- n. Seek validation of the key stakeholders for National Skills and Lifelong Learning Plan, and monitoring and evaluation framework, finalize the documents based on feedback and make submission.

Key Deliverables:

⁷ This will include examining; (i) instrument for labour market interface; (ii) current capacities to ensure labour market relevance of TVET, and informed decision making in this respect; (iii) labour market information system and available instruments and approaches to inform skills training (iv) career guidance system, (v) relevance of current curriculum, pedagogy and gaps, (vi) workplace based learning; (vii) skills recognition of nationals and expatriate workers, (viii) job placement; (ix) practices to ensure equity and inclusion; (x) role of partnerships (including the roles of social partners) and their impacts; (xi) the rationale for introducing vocational stream in general and secondary education; (x) Formalizing informal sector skills (xi) monitoring and evaluation practices.

- (a) Report on findings of KSA contextual analysis and technical assessment of the current skills system with a focus on skills governance, skills financing and quality, relevance, and effectiveness of skills delivery mechanisms
- (b) National Skills and Lifelong Learning Policy Document
- (c) National Skills and Lifelong Learning policy implementation plan
- (d) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to track the progress and impact of National Skills and Lifelong Learning policy implementation plan

Methodology

The consultant will conduct desk research and interviews to fulfill this assignment.

- I. Literature review including but not limited to: ILO relevant standards and tools⁸, the Saudi vision 2030, the HCDP, the Saudi skills strategy (2022-2030), SDGs, other strategies and policies relevant to gender, apprenticeship, competency based training, formalizing informal sector skills, disability inclusion, education strategy etc... and other relevant reports, research and publications, including statistical surveys available to supplement the findings from the interviews; consult relevant government orders/legislation to find out the policy instruments that support or hinder delivery of TVET provisions and/or raise its status and attractions.
- II. Stakeholders' interviews: government ministries/agencies, public and private training providers, employers, and workers, TVET students, Development Partners (DPs), NGOs and the Civil Societies.
- III. Orientation/training workshops for knowledge transfer – one day at the beginning of the assignment and one day at the end of the assignment
- IV. Validation workshop with MHRSD and other stakeholders
- V. Submit a draft technical report for ILO's review and a final draft incorporating ILO and MHRSD feedback

Tasks, deliverables, work efforts

| Tasks | Deliverables | Estimated No of days |
|--|--|----------------------|
| 1. Technical study on skills and lifelong learning | | 32 |
| Desk review of the existing literature, data and documents (Home base) | List of literature Proposed list of stakeholders for interview | 8 |
| Preliminary consultations with MHRSD unit for planning the assignment and preparing for the knowledge transfer workshops | Proposed orientation workshop presentation | |
| Inception report with workplan and time schedule (home base) | Inception report including detailed methodology, workplan, interview questionnaire, outline of the study report | |
| Field visit, stakeholder meetings, consultations (Mission to Riyadh; if and when needed follow-up interviews could be conducted afterwards home based) | Summary of interviews proceedings and list of stakeholders interviewed First orientation workshop final presentation and brief report | 10 |
| Debriefing with and feedback of ILO (home base) | Summary of key findings and preliminary recommendations | 2 |
| Drafting study report and submit for ILO's review (home base) | Draft report covering all aspects mentioned in the scope of work of acceptable quality to the ILO | 6 |
| Draft revised report incorporating ILO feedback (home base) | Revised report for submission to MHRSD review | 3 |
| Develop final report incorporating MHRSD and ILO feedback | Final skills benchmark study report for submission to MHRSD and outline for the national policy plan document | 3 |

⁸ Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), Human Resource Development Recommendation 2004 (No195), ILO Centenary Declaration on future of work 2019, ILO's call of action on youth employment 2012, ILC's resolution on skills and life long learning (Dec 2021), Conclusions on skills for improved productivity, employment growth and development, Recommendation on Apprenticeship standards-2023

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|---|--|-----------|
| 2. National skills policy | | 15 |
| Draft policy report for ILO's review and submit a revised version based on ILO's feedback (Home-based) | Draft and revised national skills policy document incorporating ILO's feedback | 10 |
| Validation workshop with MHRSD and other stakeholders (mission to Riyadh) including orientation workshop on future capacity needs | Validation workshop report Power point presentation agreed upon with ILO Workshop report for knowledge transfer on implementation and monitoring of the policy and assessment of capacity required | 3 |
| Submit final report incorporating feedback from the validation workshop (home-based) | Final policy report to the satisfaction of ILO | 2 |
| 3. National skills plan and skills monitoring framework | | 13 |
| Draft report of skills plan and monitoring system for ILO's review | Draft skills plan and monitoring system | 6 |
| Revise draft for MSR'D's review incorporating feedback from ILO | Revised draft skills plan and monitoring system | 3 |
| Validation of skills plan and skills monitoring system (home-based) | Validation workshop report Power point presentation agreed upon with ILO; | 2 |
| Submit final skills plan and skills monitoring system for endorsement by MHRSD | Final draft incorporating MHRSD and ILO feedback | 2 |
| Total estimated days of efforts | | 60 |

Payment Schedule

| Installment | Deliverables | Payment |
|-----------------|--|---------|
| 1 st | Inception report including detailed methodology, workplan, interview questionnaire, and other annexes (literature review, stakeholders list...) | 20% |
| 2 nd | Draft and final technical study report covering all aspects mentioned in the scope of work of acceptable quality to the ILO including summary of key findings/recommendations and interviews' proceedings and other deliverables listed under task 1 | 30% |
| 3 rd | Draft and final national skills policy incorporating feedback from MHRSD and ILO (50 pages maximum excluding annex and statistical table) including other deliverables listed under task 2 after acceptance by and to the satisfaction of ILO | 30% |
| 4 th | Draft and final skills plan and skills monitoring system incorporating feedback from MHRSD and ILO including all deliverables under task 3 after acceptance by and to the satisfaction of ILO | 20% |

Completion criteria

- All reports submitted to the ILO must be relevant to the outputs (activity and the task) mentioned in the TOR.
- Provide information and update progress as requested by the Project team of the ILO.
- Provide the report in line with ILO house style and agreed upon outline with 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 project partners' site, participate in meetings as and when necessary.

Special terms and conditions

- Intellectual property: The documents prepared by the consultant under this contract will abide to ILO terms and conditions applicable to contracts⁹ and /or any other conditions agreed upon between ILO and the government of kingdom of Saudi Arabia (MHRSD) . Therefore, the consultant cannot publish these without permission of the ILO and MHRSD.
- Insurances: The ILO accepts no liability in the event of death, injury or illness of the External Collaborator. The External Collaborator attests that he/she is adequately covered by insurance for these risks. In no circumstances shall the External Collaborator be covered by any ILO insurance and it is his/her responsibility

⁹ [TnC \(EN\).pdf \(ilo.org\)](#)

to take out, at his/her own expense, any personal insurance policies he/she may consider necessary, including a civil liability insurance policy.

Duration of the assignment and duty stations

The duration of the assignment will be for 60 working days over the period of 7 months (tentatively the assignment will be started from August 2023 but the date will be finalized after completion of recruitment process). ILO shall NOT provide office space in Riyadh and necessary logistics (like Laptop, Printer, Paper, internet, local travel, etc.) to carry out day to day jobs of the consultant.

The ILO shall cover the cost of two rounds tickets to Riyadh and Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) during the mission as per ILO rules and regulations¹⁰. The DSA will cover accommodation, local travel, and other per diem costs and will not exceed the amount listed in ILO regulations. Final decision for missions will be agreed upon with selected consultant prior initiation of contract arrangements.

Fees and payment terms

Fees are commensurate with the consultant's qualifications and experience as well as with the previous acceptable rates for similar assignment. Terms and conditions are as per the ILO rules and procedures for the purpose. The consultant's financial proposal should include all the costs to be incurred on travel and logistics. The consultant should also enclose any recent/latest contract to substantiate daily fee requested.

ILO's responsibilities

The responsibility of the ILO will be to:

- a) Provide all the documents and other related literature available as relevant to the task.
- b) Assist in coordination with relevant stakeholders.
- c) Review progress of the work and provide feedback as necessary.
- d) Ensure payment of agreed amounts, based on performance.
- e) Any other tasks/supports as required and agreed by the ILO.

Qualifications and experience of the Consultant

The assignment will be contracted to a person with demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the skills system and best practices in addition to experience in reviews of skills policy/education policy and reviews of skills development works.

Academic Qualification:

- a) An advanced University degree in policy research, education or any other social science discipline; M. Phil or PhD in the relevant field will be an added value.

Experiences:

- b) At least five years of experience in policy development, policy research, conducting policy reviews and/or review of skills/TVET projects and any mix of these.
- c) Technical expertise in designing questionnaire, analytical skills and writing skills evident by high quality publication in policy research/education/TVET/skills development.
- d) Practical experience and knowledge of UN/inter-agency work will be preferred.

Competencies:

- e) Excellent knowledge and skills of reading, writing and speaking in English.
- f) Knowledge and ability to use computer for research and report writing.
- g) Ability to work in a multi-cultural environment.
- h) Must display a high standard of ethical conduct and exhibit honesty and integrity.
- i) Gender-sensitive behaviour and attitude.

Client and users of the report:

ILO and MHRSD

Evaluation Criteria and Score

The selection of the candidate will be made based on the cumulative analysis scheme, where total score will be obtained upon combination of weighted technical and financial aspects.

(a) Technical weighted score, out of 70: When using this weighted scoring method, the award of the contract should be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

¹⁰ DSA to KSA is \$384 as per ILO regulations

- i) responsive/compliant/acceptable, and
- ii) Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% score in the technical evaluation would be considered for the Financial Evaluation. The technical proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria stated below:

Evaluation Criteria:

- Relevant educational qualification
- Relevant experience in policy review/analysis/development, policy research, preferably of education and/or TVET/skills development policies.
- Experience of working in development/implementation/appraisal/evaluation of TVET/skills programmes/projects, preferably in developing country context.
- Experience of working in Middle East or Arab countries.
- Excellent writing, reporting and communication skills in English; Arabic is an added-value

(b) Financial weighted score, out of 30:

The maximum number of points assigned to the daily fee is allocated to the lowest daily fee quoted by the applicant. All other quoted daily fees receive points in inverse proportion. The suggested formula is as follows:

$$p = y (\mu/z),$$

p = points for the daily fee being evaluated,

y = maximum number of points for the daily fee (here it is 30),

μ = the lowest daily fee

z = the daily fee being evaluated

Recommended Presentation of Proposal

Interested individuals must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications.

- **Personal CV**, indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references;
- **Technical Proposal** will specify the candidate’s qualifications and relevant experiences, and portfolio packages or samples of works in similar assignments authenticated/certified by relevant authority.
- **Financial Proposal** shall specify the professional fees for this assignment. Financial Proposal has to be submitted using the below table.
- To substantiate daily fee, any recent contract to be enclosed.

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

Breakdown of costs supporting the all-inclusive financial proposal

| Cost components | Unit cost in US\$ | Quantity | Total |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------|
| Consultant Professional fees | | 60 WD | |
| Travel to Riyadh (indicate location of departure from home) | | | |

Interested individuals must submit aforementioned documents (technical and financial proposals) to the ILO as per following:

To: singhkk@ilo.org

Cc: jaafar@ilo.org; yassinj@ilo.org; hokayem@ilo.org; nasseral@ilo.org

within **July 18, 2023 by 17:00 pm Beirut timing**. Proposers who will not submit these documents shall not be considered for further evaluation.