



Call for Expression of Interest

Independent Midterm Evaluation **Road to Jobs: Bringing decent work to rural households of the Northern Provinces in Afghanistan**

ILO-Kabul

Location	Afghanistan
Application deadline	24 November 2016
Type of contract	External Collaboration Contract
Post Level	International Consultant
Languages required	Proficiency in written and spoken English
Expected duration	30 working days (between 15 December 2016 and 31 March 2017) with field work during Jan 22 January to Feb 2 2016.

1.0 Background

Road to Jobs: Bringing decent work to rural households of the Northern Provinces in Afghanistan Project. The Project is funded by SIDA-UNOPS and is implemented by ILO Kabul. This three year Project started its implementation starting mid-2015 and will end in mid-2018. Road to Jobs (R2J) project aims at these constraints more systematically to get at the 'root causes' for the underperformance of selected value chain sectors, and in doing so to encourage local ownership of change and sustainable impact.

The proposed project intends to target the two northern provinces closely connected to the major urban centre of Mazar-e-Sharif -- Balkh and Samangan -- because of the potential to tap market linkages for the rural economy that are increasingly connected by the road network. Mazar-e-Sharif is not only the product market to sell agricultural produce and buy consumer goods, but is also an important job market and source of income for rural households. The poorer the households, the more they tend to rely on cyclical migrant work in major urban cities within Afghanistan as well as in the neighbouring countries.

Balk has the largest population in the Northern provinces (1.19 million) while Samangan has only 0.36 million). Samangan has predominantly rural population, 93% (329,900) while Balkh has a significant urban population 36% (429,900).

In accordance with ILO policy governing technical cooperation projects, both midterm and final evaluation of projects of the budget size of USD 5 million and more must undergo

independent evaluations. The midterm evaluation will apply the key criteria of relevance, validity of design, effectiveness, efficiency, gender equality as well as monitoring and evaluation to determine the progress made, lessons learnt, challenges and opportunities to date.

The midterm evaluation aims to assess the continued relevance of an intervention and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, and to identify any possible adjustments to improve the project performance. The independent midterm evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent evaluators and will be managed by the ILO Evaluation Manager based in Bangladesh Country Office.

2.0 Purpose and scope

The main purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to assess the continued relevance of the intervention and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, to identify any issues, challenges, new opportunities, and to recommend possible adjustments to improve the project performance. At the end of the evaluation, a set of practical recommendations for immediate adoption/application should be made available for the remaining period of the Project.

The objective of the midterm evaluation is to identify where and how SIDA and the ILO can optimise their support to the Government of Afghanistan in the field of employment generation, with the aim to help Afghanistan create more and better jobs in selected Northern Provinces contribute to improved livelihoods and poverty reduction.

The midterm evaluation also aims to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, potential sustainability and progress of implementation of the currently ongoing 'Road to Jobs' Project; to evaluate the quality of Project implementation so far; and to assess the Project's capacity to respond to the current situation and needs of the country, also in light of other ongoing initiatives in the field of employment generation. At the same time, taking into account the direct link of the Project with policy framework of Afghanistan, the selected experts will be also expected to analyse the relevance and quality of the Employment policy environment in line with international policy recommendations.

3.0 Evaluation approach and schedule

The evaluation will use a combination of methods and the final methodology will be determined by the evaluation team in consultation with the evaluation manager. The detailed methodology will be elaborated by the evaluation team on the basis of this TOR and documented in the Inception Report, which is subject to approval by the evaluation manager.

It is expected that the evaluation will apply mixed methods that draw on both quantitative and qualitative evidence and involve multiple means of analysis. These include but not limited to:

- Desk review of relevant documents related to performance and progress of the Project, including the initial project document, progress reports, monitoring and evaluation plan, in-built project knowledge etc.
- Interviews with the Project team in Afghanistan and with the key staff of other related ILO projects, and ILO staff responsible for technical backstopping of the project in Decent Work Technical Support Team in New Delhi and HQ. An indicative list of persons to interview will be prepared by the Project in consultation with the evaluation manager.

- Interviews with representatives of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and other key project stakeholders e.g. tripartite constituents, donors, implementing partners, and direct beneficiaries.
- Field trips to selected districts in which the Project is carrying out activities involving direct beneficiaries for more in-depth reviews at outcomes level of the respective project components. The criteria for selecting the districts will be specified by the evaluation team in the inception report.
- Stakeholders' validation workshop in Mazar-I-Sharif– upon completion of the field trips, to present the preliminary findings to key stakeholders.

Key stakeholders, i.e. SIDA-, ILO, major implementing government agencies and ministries, i.e. mainly Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs/Martyred and Disabled, Balkh Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Chamber and Industries, Ministry of Chamber and Industries ,Workers-Secretary General –Trade Union, Employers representatives (various chambers) and other key private sector players collaborating with the project.

It will be important for the evaluation experts to visit a critical number of representatives of the target groups and final beneficiaries, and to have a good mix of institutions directly benefiting from the Project and those only indirectly benefiting.

All data should be sex-disaggregated and different needs of women and men and those marginalized groups should be considered throughout the evaluation process.

4.0 Professional requirements

The mid-term evaluation will be led by an international evaluator who will be responsible to deliver the above deliverables. He/she will be supported by a national consultant. He/she will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency, and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. It is expected that the report will be written in an evidence-based manner.

Qualification of the team leader:

- A minimum of 10 year experience in design, management and evaluation of development projects
- Experience in designing evaluation tools that fit the need of the exercise, conducting desk reviews and evaluation missions, drafting of evaluation reports
- Experience in the technical areas of Employment would be an added advantage
- Ability/ experience in facilitating an evaluation stakeholders' workshop
- Excellent report writing skills.
- Excellent analytical skills with the ability to analyse and interpret data from a range of sources.
- Excellent interpersonal and engagement skills, including previous experience applying qualitative questionnaires
- Ability to write concisely in English

The following would be advantageous:

1. Regional experience in employment generation in Asia, preferably South Asia and experience and knowledge of working in Afghanistan is an advantage
2. Experience in evaluations of programmes and projects and/or evaluations of ILO and the UN System would be an asset

3. Experience or knowledge in the region ability to communicate in local language will be an asset

The ILO will also recruit an independent national consultant who will work alongside the external evaluation consultant and assist with logistics, and interpretation and other tasks assigned by the lead consultant.

Candidates intending to submit an expression of interest must supply the following information:

1. A description of how their skills, qualifications and experience are relevant to the requirements of this assignment
2. A list of previous evaluations that are relevant to the context and subject matter of this assignment.
3. A statement confirming their availability to conduct this assignment and the daily professional fee expressed in US dollars.
4. A copy of the candidate's curriculum vitae (which must include information about the qualifications held by the candidate).
5. A statement confirming that the candidate has no previous involvement in the delivery of the Road to Jobs: Bringing decent work to rural households of the Northern Provinces in Afghanistan or a personal relationship with any ILO Officials who are engaged in the project.
6. The names of two referees who are able to be contacted.

The deadline to submit expressions of interest for the evaluation is by close of business on 30 November 2016 sent by e-mail with the subject header "Evaluation of Road to Jobs (R2J) Project" to the Evaluation Manager, Khadija Khondker at khondker@ilo.org and copied to Ms Pamornrat Pringsulaka, pamornrat@ilo.org.