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# **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

## **1.1. Beneficiary country**

Syrian Arab Republic

## **1.2. Contracting Authority**

Delegation of the European Commission to Syria

## **1.3. Relevant country background**

Syria has a population of more than 19 million. Over the past 15 years, the country enjoyed a relatively stable and sound macro-economic framework, which manifested itself in a positive foreign trade balance in most years, moderate fiscal deficit, low level inflation, stable currency, low external indebtedness, and substantial foreign exchange reserves.

This relative stability has mainly been the result of a prosperous oil sector which contributed by about 60-70% to the country's foreign exchange revenues and by about 40-50% to its fiscal revenues during this period. Yet the macroeconomic framework concealed major weaknesses in Syria's economy, which entailed low investment rates and poor annual productivity gains, leading in return to a sluggish growth record and rising employment redundancies. As a consequence, Syria's economy is operating below its capacity.

The main challenge of the Syrian economy is related to the demographic pressures. The labour force is increasing at 4% annually, faster than the GDP growth rate. Combined with the depletion of oil reserves, the economy will therefore be confronted with serious problems unless the process of envisaged reforms speeds up in order to diversify non-oil activities.

Faced with a sharp drop in oil production and related exports, the Government has set objectives to stimulate economic growth and to create employment opportunities. Policies are to improve the business environment, to liberalise trade, to upgrade public institutions, to reduce bureaucracy and administrative burden, to develop human resources and to provide better services to citizens.

The changes in population by the age cohort impact on the education sector and the provision of schooling for a growing school age population. Despite the recently witnessed decline in birth rates, the need to provide education and work is at present at its peak and will not diminish in the near future. Syria's working-age population is growing rapidly, but the economy is not achieving the growth and investment needed to create jobs for the increasing numbers of people. The implementation of cooperation programmes in education has to take these movements into account in terms of number of schools, classrooms, teachers and resources for students, and also the geographical distribution of the increases in school and young working age population.

The participation rate in employment of those who attained secondary education levels and joined the labour market is 7.5% in 2005. This suggests that the majority of those graduating from general secondary education will enrol in higher education if they pass their examinations successfully.

At present, there is a misalignment between the requirements of the changing economy, its labour market and existing curricula and approach in schools. It appears that some secondary graduates often pursue higher level education or seek employment in sectors that do not fully relate to their specializations or relate to the changing national needs. That can be loss of the human resources in sectors projected in national development planning and a more knowledge and technological oriented economy.

#### 1.4. Current state of affairs in the relevant sector

Over the last years Syria invested heavily in education, which resulted in remarkable achievements on both quality and quantity levels within the framework of implementing the principles of democratization of education and compulsory education. Enrolment rates went up whereas the drop-out rates decreased. The literacy rate went up and the number of schools, universities and colleges increased. These achievements have been more evident in the wake of publication of the Basic Education Law No. 32 (2002), under which compulsory education was extended to include the first nine years. Likewise quality of educational curricula and training and qualifying systems as well as IT applications have shown remarkable success.

However, important challenges still need to be faced for the development and consolidation of an education system ready to meet the demands of the knowledge economy.

After the first nine years of compulsory education, the general secondary education offers academic courses during three years and prepares students for university entrance. The first year is introductory and in the last 2 years of this stage students enter either a literary and scientific stream. At the end of the three-year course, pupils sit for the Secondary School Leaving Certificate.

At the general secondary education level there are several constraints that should be addressed (some in fact apply to the sector as a whole):

- Secondary education system needs upgrading to be more relevant to changing human resource needs of a social market economy, labour market, as well as requirements of the different paths that can be followed at further levels of education and vocational training.
- An institutional strategy is needed to implement changes and quality improvement in secondary education.
- Quality improvement requires upgraded teaching and learning methods in schools.
- Teaching needs to promote active learning and develop cognitive skills rather than textbook based learning and thinking oriented solely to examinations.
- Rehabilitation and training for teachers and inspectors needs to be upgraded.
- Initial teachers' training should be upgraded.
- Integrated quality assurance systems are needed to monitor improvements in teacher competency and performance and the use of new curricula and methods.
- Management, planning and monitoring capacity at all levels needs strengthening to effect institutional and qualitative changes in secondary education.
- Co-ordination with private secondary education system needs to be enhanced, as well as with other levels of education: vocational and educational training (VET) & higher education.
- Leadership and management capacity of school principals needs to be upgraded.
- Availability and efficient utilisation of IT in schools needs to be improved.
- Assessment and examination systems need to be upgraded.
- Guidance and counselling system needs upgrading to enhance relevance of secondary education to changing labour market and choices for higher education.

- Access to secondary education and enrolment ratios need to be increased. Uneven access to quality secondary education needs to be reviewed.

### **1.5. Related programmes and other donor activities:**

During the past years, the EC has become the main donor in the development of human resources, focusing on higher education as well as vocational and education training. The EC in Syria is currently involved in the following projects and initiatives on higher education and vocational and education training:

- Upgrading Higher Education Sector Programme (UHES, 10 €M), which provides support to Syria's higher education reform process.
- The graduate school Higher Institute of Business Administration (HIBA, 14 €M).
- A project for the Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training (MVET, 21 €M).
- TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus, focused on the development of higher education systems through cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean higher education institutions, and the 7th Framework Programme to support research.
- Cooperation with the Ministry of Education (MoE) within the framework of an EC funded programme to support Syrian education in areas affected by a large influx of refugees from Iraq (3 €M), which is being implemented by UNICEF.
- The EU funded regional MEDA-ETE project on Education and Training for Employment (2005-10) complements the national MEDA programmes, in particular as regards support to SMEs, teacher training and a national apprenticeship framework as well as quality assurance through the exchange of experience and sharing at regional level.

The new programme aims to take stock of and benefit from these past experiences, which have shown that there is a weak linkage of the secondary education level with higher levels of education and, therefore, with the Syrian labour market.

UNICEF has long-standing and extensive experience in the education sector in Syria. It has an ongoing child protection programme in secondary education level. It is also supporting the Syrian education system where affected by a large influx of Iraqi refugees. Furthermore, it has an ongoing programme targeting the upgrading of the quality of basic education in Syria.

Some international and local NGOs (e.g. Norwegian Council, SHEBAB and World Link), as well as Germany's KfW, are also supporting the secondary education system (some to alleviate the burden caused by the large influx of Iraqi refugee students).

Japan's JICA is supporting education at the pre-primary level. Other Member States are providing scholarships and language training (mainly France, UK and Germany) and support to some higher education institutions.

At present, coordination among the donor community is very low. However some coordination mechanism has recently started in relation to donor support to the Syrian education system affected by the influx of Iraqi refugee children. The EC Delegation is participating in this coordination, which is led by the MoE and UNICEF and will certainly serve as a good opportunity to continue enhancing donor coordination at other levels in the education sector.

## **2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS**

### **2.1. Overall objective**

The general objective of the programme of which this contract will be a part is as follows: the upgrading of the performance of Human Resources in Syria according to national requirements.

The Specific Objective of this programme: Syrian Secondary Education Sector is reformed and upgraded in response to the needs of the Syrian social market economy.

### **2.2. Purpose**

The purpose of this contract is the provision of the Technical Assistance (TA) to the implementation of the "Secondary Education Support Programme" done at the Syrian Arab Republic.

### **2.3. Results to be achieved by the Consultant**

The Consultant will provide to the Programme Task Force (PTF) in particular and to the Beneficiary in general efficient technical assistance in the implementation of the programme activities with the effect to achieve the following results:

- Result 1 - Governance in the general secondary education sector is improved.
- Result 2 - Quality of general secondary education is enhanced.
- Result 3 - The National Research and Development Centre (NRDC) is established and integrated as a key institution to lead the reform and management of the education sector.

## **3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS**

### **3.1. Assumptions underlying the project intervention**

There are a number of assumptions and preconditions underlying the programme intervention, which are the following:

#### Assumptions

- Education sector remains a priority on the political agenda.
- Political and organisational commitment to reform remains high.
- Political commitment to quality of education and curriculum change continues.
- Institutions are committed and staff is motivated to operating the necessary reforms.

#### Preconditions

- The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic signs the Financing Agreement and is able to meet its commitments to the Programme.
- Political, institutional and organisational commitment to reform and development of NRDC remains high

### **3.2. Risks**

The risks are linked to the non-fulfilment of the above assumptions.

The mitigation of these risks will stem from:

- A sector donor coordination which will help keeping momentum for reform in Education.
- An adequate technical assistance, including experts capable of changing management, training and motivating the concerned staff.
- The adequate use of European Union's experience in the field of Education. Study visits and close cooperation with similar Institutions in Europe could provide incentive and best practices that will encourage and facilitate implementation of change.

## **4. SCOPE OF THE WORK**

### **4.1. General**

#### **4.1.1. Project description**

Syria will be facing in the coming years an increasing need to accelerate economic growth. The development of human resources is acknowledged to be essential to improve productivity and innovation and to achieve the economic reforms aimed by the Government of Syria.

The "Secondary Education Support Programme" (SESP) has been designed on the basis of an identification mission and a formulation mission. The findings of both missions were validated by the Syrian stakeholders in participatory workshops.

The project will aim at enhancing the Syrian secondary education system at a sectoral level and most of the activities will target the sector as a whole. Project approach has been chosen for the implementation, since the basic requirements for a Sector Policy Support Programme and budget support are not in place.

Some of the interventions will need to be piloted at school level. For this purpose, pilot institutions will be selected in those geographic areas and governorates where needs are significant.

The TA object of this contract will support all the areas of implementation and contribute to the longer-term institutionalisation of the sector development and support. The problems of the education sector in Syria and the current weaknesses in the sector strategy require for capacity building to be a strong component of the programme.

The Project will specifically provide assistance to achieve four main results through the following main activities:

**Result 1 - Governance in the general secondary education sector is improved.**

- 1.1 Capacity building of concerned secondary education stakeholders and staff.
- 1.2 Development of a Management Information System (MIS) for the sector.
- 1.3 Support to the development of a Sector Wide Strategic Plan with a set of policies, action plan and indicators.
- 1.4 Improvement of the links between secondary education and higher education levels.
- 1.5 Develop a scheme for the linkage of the public and private schools.

**Result 2 - Quality of general secondary education is enhanced.**

- 2.1 Support to the development of a Quality Assurance System.
- 2.2 Improvement of the monitoring system of school results.

- 2.3 Implementation of mechanisms for Curricula development.
- 2.4 Support of teacher rehabilitation.
- 2.5 Upgrading of initial teacher training.
- 2.6 Upgrading of assessment and evaluation systems.
- 2.7 Enhancement of the Career Guidance and Counselling systems.

Result 3 - The National Research and Development Centre (NRDC) is established and integrated as a strategic institution in the management of the sector.

- 3.1 Design of the NRDC institutional framework.
- 3.2 Implementation of the legal and institutional framework reform required to set up the NRDC.
- 3.2 Provision of supplies and networks for the NRDC.
- 3.3 Enhancement of NRDC staff competencies.

#### 4.1.2. Geographical area to be covered

The Programme will be managed by the PTF operating inside the MoE in Damascus. It will ultimately have an impact on the whole secondary education sector throughout the country. The choice of the pilot institutions will take into account the need to target under-developed areas, in particular the Eastern region of the country that has been prioritised within the 10th Five Year Plan.

#### 4.1.3. Target groups

The Programme will target managerial and technical staff from the MoE, Beneficiary of the Programme, and from other main stakeholders of the secondary education sector (such as Directorates of Education at Governorate level, schools, Ministry of Higher Education).

## 4.2. Specific activities

The TA object of this Contract will assist the Syrian Government in the development of their policy for the upgrading of the Secondary Education sector in the country through the implementation of the Programme.

The consultant will provide technical assistance, which will support the Project Task Force (PTF) in the management of the implementation of the programme activities. For this purpose, the consultant will provide the necessary capacity building and training for the Syrian staff of the PTF.

The TA will be composed of three long-term experts and of the short-term experts needed to implement the Programme. The long-term experts will be part of the PTF and will work under the authority of the Programme Director (PD), who will be the Head of the PTF. The short-term experts will also work under the authority of the PD and will be under the supervision of the long-term experts.

In total, a minimum of 2,640 senior expert days will be needed as long-term experts.

For the short-term experts, a minimum of 2,000 senior expert days and 1,200 junior expert days will be necessary.

During the Programme cycle, the consultant will in particular:

a) During initial phase

- Provide capacity building and relevant training to the Syrian contingency of the PTF (project cycle management, EC procedures, etc.)
- Support the PD in the preparation of the Programme's Overall Programme Estimate (OPE) and first Annual Programme Estimate (APE).
- Submit an inception report after four months of arrival (Inception Phase). The Inception Report will assess the situation at the outset of the Programme and outline the strategy for its implementation.

b) During implementation phase

- Provide technical advice and support for the PD concerning implementation of activities and achievement of results.
- Provide the necessary short term expertise input for the implementation of activities and achievement of results.
- Support the PD mobilising, coordinating and supervising the short-term experts.
- Ensure the transfer of know-how from the technical assistance to the Syrian counterparts.
- Ensure a continuous monitoring and evaluation of implementation in order to identify potential constraints and responses.
- Ensure a continuous capitalisation and dissemination of good practices developed by the activities of the programme.
- Support the Beneficiary in the procurement processes. For contracts which include an element of supervision of progress of contractors on other contracts (e.g., supplies), the tasks of the supervisor should include a description of the types of control which he/she must carry out. When the supervisor issues a certificate, he/she must be satisfied that relevant, reliable and sufficient evidence exists that: (i) the tasks have been properly performed; and (ii) the amounts claimed by the contractor(s) have actually and necessarily been incurred in accordance with the requirements of the contract he/she is supervising.
- Support the Beneficiary in the production of the corresponding APEs and all the required reports and tender documents.
- Support the Beneficiary in the implementation of the EC Visibility Guidelines, ensuring the sustainability and dissemination of project results. The latest Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions concerning acknowledgement of EC financing of the project must be observed (see [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm)).
- Train the Syrian officials of the PTF on management issues.
- Support the Beneficiary in the documentation of lessons learned from the EC programme implementation.

c) During closing phase

- Support the beneficiary in contract closing processes.
- Ensure a smooth phasing out of the Programme and a gradual transfer of tasks to the MoE.
- Define and hand over a follow-up Action Plan after the finalisation of the Programme.

### Reporting requirements

The consultant is expected to fully assist the Programme Director (PD) in particular and the PTF in general in complying with all the organisational and reporting requirements described hereunder (please note that these reports are additional to those required in Section 7 of these Terms of Reference). All reports must be submitted in English

- The Inception Report will be submitted to the MoE and the EC Delegation within four months from the commencement date of the Technical Assistance contract. The Inception Report will assess the situation at the outset of the Programme and outline the strategy for its implementation.
- Based on the approval of the Inception Report by the MoE and the EC Delegation, the PTF will prepare an OPE covering the entire length of the Programme. The OPE will be submitted to the Steering Committee (SC) for approval within six months from the commencement date of the TA contract. In case of need, the OPE may be updated at a later stage. In particular, the OPE (and the APEs) will demonstrate how effective coordination will take place between the planned activities of the Programme and those of other donors.
- APEs will be prepared for each year of the Programme by the PTF, starting from the commencement date of the TA contract. The first APE has to be submitted to the SC for approval within six months from the commencement date of the TA contract. The APEs will detail all activities foreseen during the year: the annual objectives, activities, human and financial resources and a calendar for disbursements. Each approved APE becomes a binding executive mandate for the PTF and must be respected accordingly. In the last APE, the PD, assisted by the PMU, will propose a calendar and an action plan for the gradual transfer of tasks to the MoE.
- The PTF management will submit six monthly progress reports for the approval of the Beneficiary and the European Commission within 15 days following the end of the reporting period. These reports will cover work progress, the coherence of activities undertaken with the programme's objectives and work plans, the difficulties encountered or foreseeable and proposed corrective measures to be taken. The 2nd six-monthly progress report of the year will constitute the annual progress report and will present an in-depth review of the activities and results of the past 12 months.
- The Final Progress Report to be submitted to the Beneficiary and the European Commission within 30 days of the end of the programme will provide a comprehensive analysis of the activities undertaken and of the results achieved compared with original objectives, activities planned in the OPE.

Study visits and seminars are an intended part of the capacity building of the Syrian staff by the TA Contract.

Study visits are intended to demonstrate working practices in countries where Education reform programmes are already under implementation and reform intentions in Syria can be made concrete and internalised.

The Consultant will also support the PTF in the organisation of the entire programme events related to the implementation of activities. Operational workshops and seminars will be organised for different purposes and following the Programme implementation needs. All these events will take place in Syria. The range of services required will cover all logistical matters. Seminars and workshops will be documented in detail in the half-yearly reports.

For every given study visit and seminar/workshop organisation, the PTF will draft the Terms of Reference and send them to the Contractor after the corresponding approval of the EC Delegation.

## Visibility

The consultant will provide a specific methodology for visibility and communication activities for the programme within a range of 300,000 Euro.

## Organisation and methodology

It is up to tenderers to prepare their own detailed organisation and methodology and technical proposals such that they fulfil the general requirements described in these Terms of Reference.

The Consultant commits itself to preserve a high quality service throughout the Programme. It will provide all the necessary backstopping to the experts. In particular, the Consultant will ensure that the programme has no interruption due to unavailability of one or more experts. The Consultant shall name one contact person in its Head Quarters who will follow the Programme throughout the implementation of the contract.

### **4.3. Project management**

#### 4.3.1. Responsible body

The Delegation of the European Commission is the contracting authority for this Contract. The Delegation assigns one of its staff member as Programme Manager responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Contract on behalf of the contracting authority.

The Beneficiary is responsible for implementing the Programme in the country. The Beneficiary of the corresponding Financing Agreement is the Ministry of Education (MoE).

#### 4.3.2. Management structure

The Programme Task Force (PTF) will support the beneficiary in the management of the programme. The Programme Steering Committee (SC) will assume steering responsibility for the programme. The Beneficiary will ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the programme implementation through a given regular workload.

The mentioned senior level Steering Committee (SC) will be responsible for the Programme at the strategic level. The SC will be chaired by the Minister of Education or his/her nominee. Membership will include representatives of the stakeholders. The EC Delegation in Syria will participate at the SC meetings as an observer. The Programme Director and the Team Leader of the International Technical Assistance act as co-secretaries of the SC. Relevant key experts for the Programme can attend the meetings as resource persons. Representatives of other donor agencies may be invited as observers for co-ordination purposes.

The project SC shall meet at least once a year, or as often as deemed necessary. The Chair will ensure that all parties receive the relevant documents, including programme estimates, at least 14 days in advance, and that detailed Minutes of the Meetings are being taken. The Minutes of the Meetings will be forwarded to all parties of the SC at least ten days after the meeting.

The SC has in particular the following tasks:

- The SC will be responsible for policy guidance to the PTF, for monitoring the overall implementation of the Programme and for co-ordination between all stakeholders.
- The SC will meet soon after the end of the inception period to approve the Inception Report and the first Annual Programme Estimates (APE).
- The SC will meet to review the progress and assist in facilitating overall Programme implementation. It will be in charge of approving the corresponding APE each year. There is a need for a separate formal endorsement of operational plans and reports by the EC. Hence, after

being endorsed by the SC, each annual activity plan and report will have to be submitted for final formal approval or non-approval to the EC Delegation.

- In case of need, the SC may be convened at other times by the MoE or the European Commission.
- The SC will also assist in facilitating overall programme implementation.

With an aim of ensuring the implementation of the programme, the Beneficiary has the following commitments:

- To ensure the full participation of the relevant sector stakeholders and selected pilot schools in the programme.
- To inform the EC about any obstacles likely to impede the smooth implementation of the programme.
- To ensure that the programme reaches its purpose and moves toward its overall objectives.

The EC Delegation will assign one of its staffs as Programme Manager responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Programme. The Programme Manager is at the operational level the contact point of the PTF within the Delegation.

The PTF is responsible for the Programme at the operational level. It will be placed at the premises of the MoE. Locating the PTF at the MoE would respond well to the basic principles of the programme (particularly better coordination and synergy between different stakeholders) and will guarantee that the interests of the various involved ministries and institutions will be taken into account. At the same time, successful implementation of the programme will enhance and strengthen the role of the MoE as a national policy co-ordination body. The Beneficiary will ensure, via a formal engagement, that the PTF, in order to be successful, will have a) direct access to the head of the MoE or his/her nominee, b) an autonomous organisational structure and status and c) specific and fully dedicated operational capacities such as office facilities (including independent communication facilities) and dedicated full-time office support staff.

The tasks of the PTF are in particular:

- To prepare the Inception Report, and the APE to be submitted to the SC for approval.
- To implement the Programme activities in conformity with the objectives of the Programme and the approved APE.
- To ensure the management of all financial, contractual (for works, supplies and services), personnel and administrative affairs of the Programme according to the EC rules and practices.
- To prepare the standardised six-monthly progress reports on technical, financial and administrative aspects of the Programme implementation.
- To prepare and attach to the final year APE a proposed action plan for phasing out the Programme activities for the post Programme situation.

The PTF will be headed by the Programme Director, whose responsibilities include:

- To secure agreement of the PTF before sending the work plans and budgets to the SC 10 days before the meeting for approving them takes place.
- To supervise the execution of the activities of the Programme, as stated in the APE.

- To approve the tender dossiers to be submitted to the EC Delegation for approval before publication, for contracts for which the MoE is the contracting authority.
- To sign the contracts to be concluded by the MoE after having received their approval by the EC Delegation.
- To approve payments related to contracts tendered and signed by the MoE prior to their execution by the EC Delegation.
- Financial management and follow up of the incidental expenditure.
- To ensure that Programme activities are well co-ordinated and that necessary pre-conditions are met concerning post-programme ownership, operation, maintenance and sustainability.
- To prepare and attach to the final year APE a proposed action plan for phasing out Programme activities and preparation for the post-Programme situation.
- To inform the MoE and the EC Delegation on a regular basis of any event affecting the Programme.
- To ensure that the programme is managed according to the EC procedures.

The PTF will include:

- Syrian staff provided by the Syrian Authorities as part of the Syrian contribution to the Programme: (i) one Syrian official as Head of the PTF and Programme Director; (ii) one Syrian official who will work on education policy and other relevant subjects; (iii) one Syrian official, who will act as the Programme Administrator and Accounting Officer; (iv) local office support staff.
- Technical assistance team (TAT) provided by the consultant, which will belong to the PTF and will be headed by a Team Leader (TL). The TAT will assist the Beneficiary in the implementation of the project, including the provision of technical expertise tasks and administrative, preparatory and ancillary tasks relating to planning, monitoring, reporting on project components, procurement, and financial management. It will be composed of (see Article 6.1 of these Terms of Reference) three long-term experts and short-term experts needed in different fields to implement the Programme.

#### 4.3.3. Facilities to be provided by the Contracting Authority and/or other parties

Office equipment for the experts and Syrian PTF staff, including computers, printers and photocopier machines must be included as part of the TA contract in the fee rates of the experts.

Running costs of the PTF office will be covered by the provision for incidental expenditure.

## **5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING**

### **5.1. Location**

The operational base of the Programme will be the PTF, which will be established within the MoE in Damascus and will be constituted by the PD and the three TA long term experts. They, as well as other experts, will operate from the PTF and, when needed, in other areas of the country.

### **5.2. Commencement date & Period of implementation**

The intended commencement date of the technical assistance contract is January 2010. It will be confirmed by an administrative order issued by the EC Delegation to Syria. The period of execution of the Contract is 48 months from this date.

## **6. REQUIREMENTS**

### **6.1. Personnel**

#### **6.1.1. Key experts**

All experts who have a crucial role in implementing the contract are referred to as key experts.

All key experts will work closely with the Syrian counterparts and will ensure the transfer of competences to them in the related fields of expertise.

Apart from the specifications indicated further in this section for each of the key experts, all of them will meet the following minimum requirements:

- Relevant postgraduate university degree. M.A or MSc. in education management would be considered an asset.
- Strong management skills and management experience.
- Strong analytical and reporting skills.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Excellent command of English. Knowledge of Arabic and French would be an asset.
- Excellent computer skills.
- Experience in working successfully in multicultural teams.
- Relevant experience in overseas assignments in development and/or transitional economies. Experience in the MEDA and ENPI region an asset.
- Experience in project management.
- Experience in EC procedures.

The profiles of the key experts for this contract are as follows:

#### **Key expert 1: Team Leader and Human Resources Project Manager Expert.**

##### Profile:

The Human Resources Development Expert will be a long-term expert. He/she will be based in Damascus and will work with the MoE for the whole duration of the Contract. He/she will

maintain a supportive role and contribute to the improvement of the efficiency of the Education sector. He/she will act as the Team Leader of the TAT and will provide overall co-ordination of the implementation of the programme activities.

Responsibilities:

As the Team Leader:

- Assistance to the MoE in the establishment and functioning of the PTF in their effective contribution to the programme implementation.
- Support the PD in the overall implementation of the Programme and in the coordination with other donors.
- Co-ordination and supervision of the various long and short-term experts who, as a team, will drive the Programme forward (including quality assurance and monitoring of performance of long and short-term experts).
- Coordination and supervision of the preparation of programme estimates and reports.
- Preparation and participation in SC meetings.

As the Human Resources Development Expert:

- Participation in the implementation of the programme in order to achieve a longer term development of the secondary education sector.
- Follow up of institutional development, the implementation of research and assessment strategies, institutional planning, human resources development and evaluation systems.
- Provision of capacity building for concerned education stakeholders.
- Carry out a review of the methodologies and procedures used for curriculum development and make recommendations for the improvement of curriculum relevance.
- Assist in the selection of Pilot schools and institutions and in the implementation of the Programme activities there.
- Supervise and coordinate all the inputs for human resources development to be provided to the programme.
- Prepare technical notes for area of responsibility.

Qualifications and experience:

- At least 15 years of experience in the education sector, with specific relevant experience in the secondary education.
- Relevant experience in education institutional development and education management, curriculum development and training need assessments (implementation experience in several national contexts required).
- Experience in pedagogic assessment and implementation of training programmes in the framework of education reforms.
- At least 5 years of experience as Team Leader within the management and implementation of projects in the field of education, in development and/or transitional economies, preferably within the framework of EC funded projects.

- Specific experience in EC project management.
  - Good understanding of the education systems, in particular of secondary education.

### **Key expert 2: Education Policy Adviser expert**

#### Profile:

The Education Policy Adviser will be a long-term expert. He/she will be based in Damascus and will work with the MoE for the whole duration of the Contract. He/she will maintain a supportive role and contribute to the improvement of the governance in the Education sector.

#### Responsibilities:

- Participation in the implementation of the programme in order to achieve a longer term development of the secondary education sector.
- Support the MoE in the development of the Syrian Sector Policy for Secondary Education and enhancement of its governance.
- Carry out a comprehensive review of the secondary education sector.
- Provide capacity building for all concerned Education stakeholders.
- Support the development of the planning and management capacity of the MoE and the concerned personnel.
- Develop alternative and innovative funding mechanisms for the Secondary Education sector.
- Review the role and operation of the different governing bodies in the sector.
- Assist in the selection of Pilot schools and institutions and in the implementation of the Programme activities there.
- Prepare technical notes for area of responsibility

#### Qualifications and experience:

- At least 15 years of experience in the education sector, with specific relevant experience in the secondary and higher education systems.
- Relevant experience in education planning and education policy development at Ministerial level (implementation experience in several national contexts required).
- Experience in the management and implementation of projects in the education sector.
- Good understanding of education systems, in particular of wide sector reform processes.

### **Key expert 3: Administrative/Financial and Procurement expert**

#### Profile:

The Administrative/Financial and Procurement expert will be a long-term expert. He/she will be based in Damascus and will work with the MoE for the whole duration of the Contract. He/she will maintain a supportive role and contribute to the overall administration of the programme.

#### Responsibilities:

- Support in the overall administration of the programme and sound financial management of funds.
- Supervision of all procurement activities whenever taking place.
- Development of regular operating budgets and a tailor made financial monitoring system.
- Financial control and efficient financial reporting considering in particular the overall financial viability of the EC funded project.
- Facilitation of audits of the EC funded project and contribution to the financial administration of tenders and contracts.

Qualifications and experience:

- At least 10 years of experience working with EC procurement, out of which 4 years of experience with EC procedures in ENPI countries.
- Sound knowledge in programme management and procurement according to EC procedures in MEDA countries.
- Experience in finance, administration and procurement

6.1.2. Other experts

The Consultant will provide short-term experts with relevant expertise in the areas of the project intervention (section 4.2). The senior short-term experts should have at least ten years of relevant professional experience in the relevant fields. The junior short-term experts should have at least four years of relevant professional experience in the relevant fields. The Consultant should pay attention to the need to ensure the active participation of professional skills with a deep knowledge of the local context.

In particular, additional short-term expertise may be required in the fields described above or in any other field relevant for the achievement of the objective of the Programme.

CVs for experts other than the key experts are not examined prior to the signature of the contract. They should not have been included in tenders.

The Consultant shall select and hire other experts as required according to the profiles identified in the Organisation & Methodology. They must indicate clearly which profile they have so it is clear which fee rate in the budget breakdown will apply. All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities accorded to them.

The selection procedures used by the Consultant to select these other experts shall be transparent, and shall be based on pre-defined criteria, including professional qualifications, language skills and work experience. The findings of the selection panel shall be recorded. The selection of experts shall be subject to approval by the Contracting Authority.

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the beneficiary country cannot be recruited as experts, unless prior written approval has been obtained from the European Commission.

6.1.3. Support staff & backstopping

Backstopping and support staff costs must be included in the fee rates of the experts.

## **6.2. Office accommodation**

Office equipment for the experts and the Syrian PTF staff, including computers, printers and photocopier machines must be included as part of the TA contract in the fee rates of the experts.

Running costs of the PTF office will be covered by the provision for incidental expenditure.

## **6.3. Facilities to be provided by the Consultant**

The Consultant shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped.

In particular it shall ensure the following:

- All administrative costs of employing the experts, such as relocation and repatriation expenses (including flights to and from Syria upon mobilisation and demobilisation), accommodation, expatriation and other allowances, leave and leave travel, etc.
- Secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities.
- Office and other equipment for the experts and Syrian PTF staff, such as personal/laptop computers, printers, photocopy machines and communication equipment. The referred equipment must be included as part of the TA contract in the fee rates of the experts. Running costs for the listed equipment, as well as for all the PTF equipment, shall also be covered by the Consultant.
- The costs of the audit certificate.

The Consultant must transfer funds as necessary to support its activities under the Contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion. If the Consultant is a consortium, the arrangements should allow for the maximum flexibility in project implementation. Arrangements offering each consortium member a fixed percentage of the work to be undertaken under the contract should be avoided.

## **6.4. Equipment**

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the Contracting Authority country as part of this service contract or transferred to the Contracting Authority. Any equipment related to this contract which is to be acquired by the beneficiary country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

## **6.5. Incidental expenditure**

The Provision for incidental expenditure covers the eligible incidental expenditure incurred under this contract. It cannot be used for costs which should be covered by the Consultant as part of its fee rates, as defined above. Its use is governed by the provisions in the General Conditions and the notes in Annex V of the contract. It will be detailed within the annual work plans of the Programme, and is conditional to prior authorisation by the Contracting Authority. It covers:

- Costs of transportation in Damascus for the PTF (long term experts and the Syrian staff). Commuting is not included in the transportation cost.
- Travel costs and subsistence allowances of the long term PTF experts and of all the Syrian PTF staff for missions to be undertaken as part of this Contract, from Damascus to other parts of Syria and overseas, in order to implement the activities of the Programme (short-term experts are covered by their fees for per diem and travel expenses).

- Costs of training, study tours, workshops and seminars, such as production of training materials, translation and interpretation during sessions, travel and per diem.
- All running costs of the programme (including those of the PTF), which will be invoiced at actual cost as incidental expenditure of the TA contract.
- Salaries for local support staff that might be needed for the PTF in addition to the supporting PTF staff that will be provided by the MoE (two assistants, two secretaries, one driver).
- Visibility and communication costs for the programme within a range of 300,000 Euro.

The Provision for incidental expenditure for this contract is EUR 900,000. This amount must be included without modification in the Budget breakdown.

All costs relating to the provision of experts (including travel to/from the beneficiary country and subsistence once there, apart from missions specified in these terms of reference) must be included in the fee rates.

Any subsistence allowances to be paid for missions undertaken as part of this contract, requiring an overnight stay away from the base of operations in the beneficiary country, must not exceed (at the start of each such mission and for each night away from the base of operations) the per diem rates published on the Web site:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/index_en.htm)

## **6.6. Expenditure verification**

The Provision for expenditure verification relates to the fees of the auditor who has been charged with the expenditure verification of this contract in order to proceed with the payment of further pre-financing instalments if any and/or interim payments if any.

The Provision for expenditure verification for this contract is EUR 40,000. This amount must be included without modification in the Budget breakdown.

This provision cannot be decreased but can be increased during the execution of the contract.

## **7. REPORTS**

### **7.1. Reporting requirements**

Please refer to Article 26 of the General Conditions. Interim reports must be prepared every six months during the period of implementation of the tasks. They must be provided along with the corresponding invoice, the financial report and an expenditure verification report defined in Article 28 of the General Conditions. There must be a final report, a final invoice and the financial report accompanied by an expenditure verification report at the end of the period of implementation of the tasks. The draft final report must be submitted at least one month before the end of the period of implementation of the tasks. Note that these interim and final reports are additional to any required in Section 4.2 of these Terms of Reference.

Each report shall consist of a narrative section and a financial section. The financial section must contain details of the time inputs of the experts, of the incidental expenditure and of the provision for expenditure verification.

## **7.2. Submission & approval of progress reports**

Three paper copies and one electronic copy of the progress reports referred to above must be submitted to the Project Manager identified in the contract. The progress reports must be written in English. The Project Manager is responsible for approving the progress reports.

## **8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **8.1. Definition of indicators**

In relation to the programme implementation, the Consultant will propose indicators in the Logical Framework part of its tender. The Consultant will review the indicators in the inception report and they will be approved by the SC in connection with the approval of the OPE. In case of need, the indicators may later be revised with the approval of the SC.

The Consultant will also propose indicators to measure specific performance regarding the implementation of the technical assistance contract object of this Terms of Reference.

### **8.2. Special requirements**

Day-to-day technical and financial monitoring will be a continuous process as part of the consultant's responsibilities. To this aim, the consultant shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial, monitoring system to the project, which will be used to elaborate the progress reports.

A systematic result-oriented monitoring will be carried out throughout the life of the Programme. The Programme will also undergo a mid-term review, a final ex-ante evaluation, a final ex-post evaluation and a final financial audit.

The European Commission will prepare the terms of reference and select the service providers for the monitoring and evaluation missions according to its internal procedures (not paid under this contract). The results of all monitoring and evaluation reports will be communicated by the European Commission to the Beneficiary. In addition to the above-mentioned evaluations, the European Commission may send specific missions at any time to assess the Programme progress.

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