

Terms of Reference: Evaluation of the Procurement Professional Training Program in Lesotho

Number of Working Days: 40 Working days

Duration of Assignment: 4 Months

Selection Method: The selection process will be according to the procedures of the AfDB.

Location: Maseru, Lesotho

1. BACKGROUND

At an early stage in the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Government of Lesotho (GoL) agreed that a major obstacle on raising standards in Public Financial Management (PFM) was the lack of human resource capacity in various areas including procurement. A study carried out by the UK Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in 2006 recommended the introduction of professional training programs aimed at building competencies and skills of government employees in procurement and other PFM disciplines. This recommendation was accepted and the programs commenced in early 2007 with the accountancy and audit courses operated at the Lesotho Centre for Accounting Studies (with examinations for the CIPFA International Certificate and Diploma qualifications conducted joint by CIPFA and the Lesotho Institute of Accountants), and in procurement at the Institute for Development Management with students sitting for the external qualifications of the UK Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS). The then Ministry of Finance and Development Planning using a grant from Irish Aid specifically for this purpose provided funding for the program from 2007 to 2012.

Consequently, the Government decided to carry on financing the program beyond 2012 in the absence of a clear strategy for student coordination, academic performance appraisal, conditions of student financing, and a proper service level agreement with the partner institution. Over the years, the Ministry of Finance has observed a quantum leap in failure rate of students across all levels, and a sharp decline in engagement with the delivering institution to ensure the quality of professional development. One of the implications brought by the above has been the unstructured process for confirming the exact number of students enrolled at any given point in time, and the absence of statistics of fully qualified professionals who have gone through all qualification levels. This situation continues to date amid little evidence that the program has had traceable contributions towards improvement of Procurement staff performance across all MDAs. To date, the procurement function remains one of the weakest links in Lesotho's PFM system amid a history of consistent support channelled towards improvement, thus justifying a need for comprehensive review of the strategies for implementing procurement reform, particularly for human capacity development through CIPS professional certification program.

2. DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

2.1 Main Objective

The overall objective of the PFMR project is to contribute to the implementation of Lesotho's national development agenda as embodied in the Vision 2020, which states that by the year 2020:

“Lesotho shall be a stable democracy, a united and prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours. It shall have a healthy and well developed human resource base, a strong economy, a well-managed environment and an established technological base”.

2.2 Purpose

The main purpose of this assignment is to undertake a thorough evaluation of the professional procurement training programme offered by Institute for Development Management - Lesotho to determine the extent of its contribution towards improvement of public sector procurement practises over the years (return on investment); its relevance to current PFM context, and lessons learned and prospects of continued programme support versus alternative professional training program and capacity development models for improving procurement staff performance.

2.3 Main tasks/activities

The principal responsibilities of the consultant will mainly include the following:

- a) Consult and engage trainees, departments and ministries who benefited from the training program with a view to assess effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability of the professional training program;
- b) Assess the relevance of CIPS certification program in improvement public procurement capacity in Lesotho;
- c) Determine the extent to which the programme enables attainment of relevant learning outcomes;
- d) Determine appropriateness of structure, scope and sequence of programme;
- e) Determine appropriateness of admission and qualification requirements;
- f) Determine whether curriculum shows good balance in the development of theoretical, practical, problem solving and experiential skills in line with the requirements of the discipline and purpose of the programme;
- g) Critically comment on appropriateness of continuing with the current model for capacity development of procurement personnel, and suggest alternatives where necessary;
- h) Review progress and achievement of the training program in line with resources spent;
- i) Assess whether the program met all its development objectives and achieved results as initially expected;
- j) Examine the extent to which the Ministry/sponsoring department is efficiently managing, supervising and implementing the training program
- k) Determine effectiveness of programme oversight arrangements and reporting;
- l) Take stock of total yield of fully qualified graduates over the last six years (2013 to 2018) versus the estimate total number of students sponsored over the same period;
- m) Critically examine programme delivery methods in place and in-year academic support to ensure adequate student aptitude levels;
- n) Assess performance of the IDP and the sponsoring Ministries at all stages of programme
- o) Determine how sustainable the arrangements between IDM and CIPS are and recommend, if at all, other mechanisms for sustaining public procurement training in Lesotho;
- p) Assess and identify the main factors hinder and enable the Government to appropriately program, and manage the training program and to achieve results;
- q) Assess the key factors that led to high failures rates and recommend actions for improving pass rates for procurement certification programme in Lesotho;
- r) Identify main interventions that had impact (negative or positive) on the performance of the training program as well as implementation bottlenecks;

- s) Indicate how the training would evolve in the context of the Procurement Bill (currently under development) is passed into law;
- t) Draw up lessons to be learnt and recommendations with regard to the selection of trainees, planning, organisation, delivery, and monitoring and supervision of the training program as well factors critical for the success of the program.

2.4 Scope of training

The selected individual consultant is to carry out an assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the professional procurement training programme for procurement cadre across government. The consultant is expected to work directly with Director Procurement Policy and Advisory Department and Director Planning Unit of Ministry of Finance, and through them, conduct interviews with focal persons at Institute of Development Management as well as gathering relevant material for the assignment.

2.5 Deliverables

Based on the preliminary desk study and interviews, the consultant is expected to produce:

- I.** Inception report including at least:
 - a) Literature review and definitions of terms and concepts
 - b) Detailed approach and methodology to conduct the assessments¹
 - c) Detailed time and activity schedule
 - d) Assessment questionnaires and or tools

On the basis of feedback on the inception report plus field work to collect and analyse the data, the consultant should produce:

- II.** Draft report of the professional procurement training program evaluation in line with the principles of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the program including an executive summary, and Recommendations with respect to design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the program:
- III.** Final Report of the program evaluation not exceeding 30 pages excluding appendices, including at least all the above.

3. DURATION AND LOCATION

3.1 Starting period

The consultancy assignment will be undertaken in 40 non-consecutive working days over a period of 4 months starting from September, 2019 and ending not later than 31st December 2019.

3.2 Location(s) of assignment

Most of the work will be carried out in Maseru, Lesotho.

3.3 Management structure and work relationships

¹ Apart from the scientifically proven methodologies with respect to sampling in project interventions, and stakeholders' representatives, the methods to be used in this assessment can be selected freely but they must be clearly defined in the consultant's proposal.

The assignment will be technically coordinated by the Director Procurement Policy and Advisory Department, and administratively supported by the Project Coordinator.

The consultant will organize a meeting with the relevant stakeholders in Maseru to present and substantiate the findings and recommendations.

4. REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Submission of reports

The deliverables are to be submitted to the Project Coordinator in MS Word soft copy who will then share with Director of PPAD and Planning Unit of the Ministry of Finance.

All reports and other documents/outputs shall be in the English language.

4.2 Submission/comments timing

Except where specifically indicated, the comments on the reports shall be submitted to the consultant within five (5) working days of receipt. The report shall be deemed to have been approved in the event that no comments are provided by the assignment beneficiaries within this period.

5. Payment Schedule

Deliverables	Payment (%)
Inception report approved by the client	10%
Draft report professional procurement training program evaluation covering the main issues highlighted in section 2.3 and 2.5 above	40%
Final Report incorporating comments from stakeholders, not exceeding 30 pages excluding appendices	40%

6. EXPERTS PROFILE or EXPERTISE REQUIRED

6.1 Required expertise

The expert must possess at least the following qualifications and skills:

- i) Must hold a Master's degree in Procurement, Business Administration, Public Finance Management or related field. A PhD would be an added advantage.
- ii) Must be a member of the Accrediting Council of Colleges and Schools or similar body
- iii) He/she should have a good understanding of Procurement governance, systems and accompanying legislation in the Public Sector in Africa and internationally;
- iv) His/her experience must include evaluation of professional training programs, and provision of quality assurance services on professional qualifications that may include those in procurement as part of work-place capacity building;
- v) Experience in working with national qualifications authorities for quality assurance and standards setting;
- vi) Knowledge and experience in dealing with accreditation systems for schools, colleges and adult centres;
- vii) A minimum of 10 years of post-qualification experience in a Procurement field.