

## Call for expression of interest

### Final Independent Evaluation “Applying the G20 Training Strategy:

### A partnership between the ILO and the Russian Federation” (Phase 2)

<b>ILO Project Code</b>	INT/16/01/RUS (106013)
<b>Policy Outcome</b>	Outcome 1/ILO P&B 2018-2019 Outcome 3/ILO P&B 2020-2021
<b>Contribution to SDGs:</b>	4.4 and 8.6
<b>Administrative Unit in charge of the Project</b>	Employment Policy Department
<b>Technical Backstopping Unit</b>	Skills and Employability Branch (SKILLS)
<b>Type of Evaluation</b>	Final Independent
<b>Project Period</b>	December 2016 – June 2021
<b>Total Project Budget</b>	USD 12 Million
<b>Geographical Coverage</b>	Armenia; Kyrgyzstan; Tajikistan, Jordan; Viet Nam; Five Regions of the Russian Federation (Amur, Arkhangelsk, Khabarovsk, Krasnoyarsk, and Sakha-Yakutia)
<b>Funding Agency</b>	Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation

#### I. INTRODUCTION ON THE PROJECT

The Project is a continued response of the Russian Federation and the ILO to support the application of the G20 Training Strategy. The major focus of the Project is on training of relevant national staff to critically analyse and improve the national and sectoral Skills Development systems in the recipient countries.

Phase 2 of the Project was developed based on the results and the lessons learned from the first phase while fully taking into account the recommendations made in [the independent evaluation of the first phase](#) of the Project, which in particular, insisted on the involvement of all key stakeholders from recipient countries in overall project design.

The Skills Development needs of the recipient countries have been identified [at technical consultations](#) conducted by Project developers in each of the countries. The Project objectives, activities and expected results were formulated in the Project Document to reflect the various interests of the governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations in each of the countries.

The ultimate goal of the project is to strengthen national Skills Development systems, policies and strategies to enhance employment opportunities for both women and men. In particular, the project aimed to address a number of key challenges that the TVET system is currently facing at a policy and institutional level.

#### **The Project aimed at:**

- Increase the capacity of governments and stakeholders to review, reform and implement national training policies, strategies and systems in line with identified priorities;
- Strengthen skills training systems in economic sectors through development of capacity for producing and applying occupational standards, qualifications, programs of competency-based training and assessment instruments;

- Upgrade and apply software-based training products to support TVET institutions in five regions and selected sectors of the Russian Federation and in selected recipient countries by Moscow School of Management, Skolkovo (SKOLKOVO).

**The Project was implemented in the following countries:**

- Armenia
- Tajikistan
- Kyrgyzstan
- The Russian Federation (Component led by SKOLKOVO)
- Jordan
- Viet Nam

The main partners of the Project included governments', employers' and worker's representatives, as well as TVET institutions, statistical offices, research institutions and other international organizations working on the field of TVET education and Skills Development in each of the target countries. The Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation is the donor of the Project.

During the implementation period of the Project, [an evaluability assessment and a mid-term evaluation were undertaken](#).

## **II. RATIONAL FOR EVALUATION**

In line with the ILO's Evaluation Policy (2017), projects with budgets over US\$5 million must undergo a mid-term and a final evaluation, both of which must be independent. [The independent Mid-term Evaluation](#) was conducted in November and December 2018. The goal of the Mid-term Evaluation was to review the project performance and enhance learning within the ILO and among stakeholders. In particular, the Mid-term evaluation provided strategic and operational recommendations as well as highlighted lessons to improve performance and delivery of result.

The Final evaluation will focus on the outcome of the project and the likelihood that the results will be able to achieve a sustainable impact. This final evaluation provides an opportunity for in-depth reflections on the strategy and assumptions guiding the intervention. It will assess the extent to which the intervention achieved its objectives; it will document lessons learnt from implementation, and may make recommendations for the sustainability of the outcomes. This evaluation is also a mean to assess how well interventions supported higher level ILO strategies and objectives, as articulated in Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and the ILO's Programme and Budget (P&B), as well as SDG 4 and 8.

Since 2020, the world of work is being profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. ILO projects, programmes and their beneficiaries are responding and adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic. The evaluation will also review and assess the impact of the crisis on the implementation of the project and lessons learnt from the response of the interventions.

ILO independent project evaluation serves accountability purposes by reporting to donors and national partners on the extent to which the intended outcomes are achieved. It also offers evidence of whether or not the activities and outputs described in the project document are actually undertaken and/or produced. The ILO Constituents, project teams and the donor as the key stakeholders will be consulted throughout the evaluation process.

This Final evaluation of the project is going to start in June 2021, with the final report expected to be completed by September 2021.

### III. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND CLIENTS OF THE EVALUATION

#### The Evaluation serves the following main purposes:

- Provides an independent assessment of progress on the achievement towards the Project's development objective, assessing performance as per the established indicators vis-à-vis the strategies and implementation modalities chosen and project management arrangements;
- Provides strategic recommendations, highlights good practices and lessons learnt

Moreover it:

- Advises future project development;
- Contributes towards organizational learning;
- Helps those responsible for managing the resources and activities of a project to enhance development results from the short term to a sustainable long term;
- Assesses the effectiveness of planning and management for future impacts;
- Supports accountability aims by incorporating lessons learned in the decision-making process of project stakeholders, including donors and national partners.

#### Scope:

The evaluation will cover the duration of Phase 2 of the Project since its inception phase initiated in January 2017 to June 2021 and its full geographic coverage at both Headquarters and Country level, including the components managed by Implementing Partners. The evaluation will also take into account the results of the first phase as a starting point on which this project was designed. The evaluation will cover all outcomes of the project, with particular attention to coherence and synergies across components, and across countries.

All Project Countries will be assessed as part of the desk review, developing a typology of countries, the basis of which a sample of 4 countries will be selected for in-depth analysis and e-meetings with the Project stakeholders and beneficiaries. The countries selected will be further determined and informed by the evaluation methodology proposed by the independent evaluator.

The Final Evaluation will serve the following clients' groups: Project Advisory Committee, Project National Steering Committees, ILO Employment / Skills, ILO DWT/CO-Moscow, ILO DWT-Beirut / CO - Jordan, ILO DWT-Bangkok / CO- Vietnam as well as ILO overall as part of organisational learning.

### IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY QUESTIONS

The evaluation will follow the [UN Evaluation Standards and Norms](#), [the Glossary of key terms in evaluation and Results-Based Management](#) and utilise the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee \(OECD DAC\)](#) evaluation criteria as outlined below:

- Relevance and strategic fit – the extent to which the objectives are in keeping with Sub-Regional, national and local priorities and needs, Constituents' priorities and needs, and the donor's priorities for the Project countries;
- Coherence: the extent to which other interventions support or undermine the intervention, and vice versa. This includes internal coherence and external coherence, in particular, synergies and fit with national initiatives and with other donor-supported projects and project visibility;
- Validity of design – the extent to which the project design, logic, strategy and elements are/ remain valid vis-à-vis problems and needs;

- Effectiveness - the extent to which the project can be said to have contributed to the development objectives and the immediate objectives and more concretely whether the stated outputs have been produced satisfactorily; in addition to building synergies with national initiatives and with other donor-supported projects and project visibility;
- Efficiency - the productivity of the project implementation process taken as a measure of the extent to which the outputs achieved are derived from an efficient use of financial, material and human resources;
- Progress towards impact - positive and negative changes and effects caused by the Project at the Sub-Regional and National levels, i.e. the impact with Social Partners and various implementing partner organisations;
- Sustainability – the extent to which adequate capacity building of Project stakeholders has taken place to ensure mechanisms are in place to sustain activities and whether the existing results are likely to be maintained beyond project completion.

### **Evaluation Questions:**

The evaluation will examine the programme and its different components on the basis of specific evaluation questions (final list to be validated as part of the inception phase) and against the standard evaluation criteria mentioned above. The independent evaluator will start from the proposed set of questions given in the final TORs based on a consultation process and develop a more detailed analytical structure of questions and sub-questions.

## **V. METHODOLOGY**

The Evaluation will be carried out in accordance with [the ILO evaluation policy](#) based on the [United Nations Evaluation Norms and Standards](#), following ILO Evaluation Guidelines and Support Guidance Documentation. It fully adheres to ILO evaluation norms, standards and ethical safeguards as well as to the [OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards](#).

The evaluation methodology is expected to use a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, to be defined and approved as part of the evaluation inception report. The methods are expected to create a space for a sample of all stakeholders and beneficiaries to voice their opinions and analysis, that will be compared and consolidated into the evaluation document. To the extent possible, all categories of project participants should be represented.

The evaluation methodology should include examining the interventions' Theory of Change, specifically in the light of logical connect between levels of results, its coherence with external factors, and their alignment with the ILO's strategic objectives, SDGs and related targets, national and ILO country level outcomes. A special focus will also be on the evolving risk analysis and proposed coping mechanisms. The methodology should clearly state the limitations of the chosen evaluation methods, including those related to representation of specific group of stakeholders.

### **Envisaged steps include the following:**

- 1) Desk Review: Review of programmes and its components materials, publications, data, among others;
- 2) Inception meeting with the project team and technical backstopping unit in ILO HQ. The objective of the consultation is to reach a common understanding regarding the status of the project, the priority assessment questions, available data sources and data collection instruments and an outline of the final evaluation report. The following topics will be

- covered: project background and materials, key evaluation questions and priorities, list of stakeholders, criteria for country selection, outline of the inception and final report.
- 3) Initial interviews through conference calls or surveys with key stakeholders including (but not limited to) representatives from partners and entities who have participated in project activities;
  - 4) Submission of an Inception Report with the final methodology and Work Plan. The Inception Report and the Work Plan will be subject to approval by the Evaluation Manager, and it will indicate the steps/phases and dates of the process in which the Evaluation will take place;
  - 5) Additional documents review and analysis, data collection prior or in parallel to the evaluation interviews as required by the proposed methodology;
  - 6) Evaluation interviews (individual or collective) with stakeholders;
  - 7) Drafting evaluation reports;
  - 8) Presentations to the ILO project team and the key stakeholders on the draft report
  - 9) Finalization of the evaluation report.

The current COVID-19 pandemic severely restricts the mobility of staff and consultants. Based on the matrix developed by the ILO on the Constraints and risks as measured against the criticality of the evaluation to the ILO, the global component evaluation will be conducted in a totally remote way, relying on e-surveys. For some country components it might be feasible to use a hybrid face to face/remote approach for collecting data by a national consultant if possible – depending on the COVID19 pandemic evolution. [ILO Evaluation Office guidance on the evaluation process during COVID-19](#) should serve as the main guidance on the subject.

When and where relevant, evaluation questions will also be guided by the [ILO protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's COVID-19 response measure through project and programme evaluations](#). The independent evaluator, the project team and the evaluation manager, under the guidance of EVAL, should propose alternative methodologies to address the data collection that will be reflected in the inception phase of the evaluation developed by the evaluation team. These will be reflected in the Inception Report.

## **VI. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT**

A designated ILO staff who has no prior involvement in the project will manage this independent evaluation with oversight provided by the ILO Evaluation Office. The independent evaluator, together with an evaluation team and/or national consultants, will be commissioned to conduct this evaluation. The evaluation will be funded from the budget of the project.

### **The tasks of the evaluation manager are as follows:**

- Draft and finalize the evaluation TOR upon receiving inputs from key stakeholders;
- Reviewing CV and proposals of the proposed independent evaluator;
- Guides the independent evaluator during the evaluation process;
- Providing project background documents to the independent evaluator;
- Coordinate with the project team on the remote interview agenda of the independent evaluator;
- Briefing the independent evaluator on ILO evaluation procedures, together with EVAL specialist;
- Circulating the report to the stakeholders concerned for their comments;
- Reviewing and providing comments of the draft evaluation report;
- Consolidate comments and send them back to the independent evaluator;

- Review and approve the evaluation report and submit to EVAL for final approval.

The ILO HQ project team will handle administrative contractual arrangements with the independent evaluator and provide any financial, logistical and other assistance as required.

**The project teams of HQ and the countries concerned will be responsible for the following tasks:**

- Provide project background materials to the independent evaluator;
- Prepare a list of recommended interviewees;
- Schedule remote meetings for the independent evaluator with the project team at both global and country level;
- Participate meetings, workshops or interview and provide inputs as requested by the independent evaluator during the evaluation process;
- Review and provide comments on TOR and the draft evaluation reports.

## **VII. TASKS OF THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR AND MAIN DELIVERABLES**

**The independent evaluators will provide the following deliverables and tasks:**

- **Deliverable 1: Inception report.**  
The inception report will include among other elements the evaluation questions and data collection methodologies and techniques, proposed data presentation techniques for cross over analysis of the level of satisfactions for the interventions of the project, and the evaluation tools (interview, guides, self-administered questionnaires, etc.). The independent evaluator will prepare an inception report within one week after the contract signed.
- **Deliverable 2: Stakeholder workshop.**  
The independent evaluator will conduct remote workshop for the project countries to validate information and data collected through various methods and to share the preliminary findings with the key local stakeholders at the end of each field mission, or, remote interviews if travel restrictions are applied in project countries, lock down applied and stakeholders are unwilling to meet in person at the COVID-19 situation. The relevant ILO officials in the project countries will help organize the stakeholder workshops or remote interviews. Evaluation findings should be based on facts, evidence and data.
- **Deliverable 3: Draft evaluation report.**  
Evaluation report should include action-oriented, practical and specific recommendations assigning or designating audiences/implementers/users.  
The draft evaluation report should be prepared as per the [ILO Checklist 5: Preparing the Evaluation Report](#), which will be provided to the independent evaluators. It should address all the evaluation questions and present explicit comparative and crossover analysis, in table format, of level of satisfaction towards the projects using appropriate data presentation techniques.
- **Deliverable 4: Presentations of draft report.** Presentations should be prepared and conducted by the evaluation team for the ILO project team and the key stakeholders on the draft report.
- **Final evaluation report:** The evaluation team will incorporate comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders into the final report. The report should be finalized as per the [ILO Checklist 5: Preparing the Evaluation Report](#). The quality of the report and evaluation summary will be assessed against the [ILO Checklist 5](#), [Checklist 6](#), [Checklist 7](#), and [Checklist 8](#).

## VIII. COMPLETION CRITERIA

Acceptance will be acknowledged only if the deliverable(s) concerned are judged to be in accordance with the requirements set out in the contract, to reflect agreements reached and plans submitted during the contract process, and incorporate or reflect consideration of amendments proposed by ILO.

Completion and acceptance of the final report will be based on [the criteria set out by the ILO Evaluation Office](#).

Gender equality issues shall be explicitly addressed throughout the evaluation activities of the consultant and all outputs including final reports or events need to be gender mainstreamed as well as included in the evaluation summary (please see [ILO Evaluation Guidance on Integrating gender in monitoring and evaluation of projects](#)).

The evaluation approach should also consider the ILO normative and tripartite mandate, using ILO Evaluation Office guidance [Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate](#).

Deliverables will be regarded as delivered when they have been received electronically by the Evaluation Manager and confirmed acceptance of them.

## IX. SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The reports and all other outputs of the evaluation must be produced in English. All draft and final outputs, including supporting documents, analytical reports and raw data should be provided in electronic version compatible with Word for Windows. All data and information received from the ILO for the purpose of this assignment will be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to the ILO. Use of the data for publication and other presentation can only be made with the agreement of ILO. Key stakeholders can make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

## X. EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS AND PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The independent final evaluation will be conducted by a lead international evaluator, who will work with the support of a team of consultants, and if applicable, with the national consultants.

This call for expression of interest is open to:

- International consultants interested in the role of lead evaluator;
- Evaluation consultancy firms or teams of consultants already organized under the leadership of an evaluator.

In case a candidate from an individual submission is chosen as lead evaluator, the ILO will select additional consultants to perform specific tasks in consultation with the lead evaluator.

Gender balance in team composition is required for submissions by teams of consultants.

The selection of the consultant (or team of consultants) will be based on the qualifications and experience of potential candidates as described in their expression of interest (EoI) for the assignment.

**Interested candidates should include in their EoI:**

- Detailed description of their knowledge of the specific subject area (i.e. Skills and employability, skills policies and systems);
- Detailed description of previous programme, organizational and thematic experience relevant to this assignment;
- CVs;
- Financial proposal, with details of the daily rate for the evaluation work as well as any other potential cost and a breakdown of working days according the expected deliverables (see list above) and a preliminary timeline;
- Statement of availability for the assignment (specifying available starting dates in June 2021);
- If applicable, information on their network and ability to identify national consultants in the countries targeted by the project

## **XI. INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR QUALIFICATION**

### **The independent lead evaluator will have the following profile:**

- Advanced university degree in social sciences or related graduate qualifications;
- A minimum of 10 years of professional experience specifically in evaluating international development initiatives, experience in the area of skills will be an added advantage;
- Minimum five years of experience in conducting programme or project evaluations;
- Experience in managing teams of national consultants
- Proven experience with logical framework approaches and other strategic planning approaches, M&E methods and approaches (including quantitative, qualitative and participatory), information analysis and report writing;
- Fluency in written and spoken English is required. Knowledge of one or more languages spoken in the project countries would be an asset;
- Knowledge of ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming is desirable;
- Understanding of the development context of the Project Countries is an advantage;
- Excellent consultative, communication and interview skills; Demonstrated excellent report writing skills in English; and Demonstrated ability to deliver quality results within strict deadlines.

### **The national consultants will have the following profile:**

- Proven evaluation experience at national and preferable regional level;
- Experience in conducting interviews, both in person and virtually;
- Experience from evaluations of internationally funded development cooperation programmes and projects;
- Ability to work in English as well as the required national language;
- Preferable experience from evaluation of ILO projects or related areas of work in the field of employment/Skill;
- Experience from working as part of an international team of consultants, working to a common evaluation framework and providing required structured input to the evaluation, such as through case-studies;
- No previous involvement with the project under evaluation.

**Annex: [Applying the G20 Training Strategy \(Phase I\) - Final Evaluation in 2015, and, Applying the G20 Training Strategy \(Phase II\) - Midterm Evaluation in 2018](#)**



**The deadline to submit EoI for this Final Evaluation is by close of business June 18, 2021. Please send your EoI via email to [liu@ilo.org](mailto:liu@ilo.org) with a copy to [wichmand@ilo.org](mailto:wichmand@ilo.org) and indicate: “Applying the G20 Training Strategy (Phase 2) final evaluation” in your e-mail subject line.**