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| **TERMS OF REFERENCE** | |
| Title of the Consultancy: | Scoping Exercise towards the development of an African Occupational Standards Development Framework(AOSDF) |
| Consultancy type:  *(individual or firm)* | Individual |
| Procurement Number (from procurement plan) | 125/AUDA/HCID/ID/ICS/2024 |
| **Introduction**  The AUDA-NEPAD is the Development Agency of the African Union mandated to i) strengthen capacity of African Union Member States and regional bodies; and Advance knowledge-based advisory support (national); ii) coordinate and Execute priority regional and continental projects to promote regional integration towards the accelerated realisation of Agenda 2063 (regional); iii) serve as the continent’s technical interface with all Africa’s development stakeholders and development partners (continental); iv) undertake the full range of resource mobilisation (global).  AUDA-NEPAD mobilizes expert knowledge and resources to support the design and development of investment programmes for wealth creation and socioeconomic growth. In advocating and promoting the African Union principles of ownership and leadership of the continent’s development process, AUDA-NEPAD engages African and global stakeholders in closer and value-driven partnerships. To deliver on its strategic objectives, AUDA-NEPAD strategic priorities are:  1. Economic Integration;  2. Human and Institutional Development;  3. Food Systems and Empowerment of Rural Communities;  4. Sustainable Energy;  5. Climate Resilience, Environment and Natural Resources Management;  6. Science, Technology and Innovation; and  7. Institutional Enhancement. | |
| **Background**  Africa, with a population of 1.4 billion people, has the unique distinction of being the only continent where the working-age population will experience significant growth beyond the year 2035. Additionally, 65% of Africa's population is under the age of 35. The projected number of individuals in Africa's youth population (aged 15-35) is expected to reach 664 million by 2030, with females accounting for nearly 50% of this demographic.  At the Continental level, the following policy frameworks are in place to address youth skills development:   1. **The Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA)** articulates an agenda for the transformation of education systems along ten priority areas: equitable and inclusive access education for all; inclusion, equity and gender equality; teachers and teaching; educational quality and learning outcomes; science, technology and skills development; education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCE); youth and adult literacy; skills and competencies for life and work; financing, governance and partnerships; and education in crisis or conflict situations. 2. **The AU Continental Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Strategy** offers a comprehensive framework for the design and development of national policies and strategies to strengthen TVET for increased labour productivity, job and wealth creation, poverty reduction and youth empowerment. This includes building the TVET national, regional and continental ecosystem as well as entrepreneurship education and training in African TVET institutions. 3. **The “Plan of Action for 2019-2028 African Decade for Technical, Professional and Entrepreneurial Training and Youth Employment”** identifies concrete actions to re-orient education and training systems to address the mismatch between education and training and labour market needs through high-quality learning experiences and coherent policies at regional and national levels. The Plan of Action includes set goals and targets to improving TVET; STEM; use of digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and assessment; promoting entrepreneurship and innovation and building leadership capacities; embedding a new model of inspections; focused engagement with enterprises; and enhancing apprenticeships. 4. **AU Digital Education Strategy** serves as an attendant framework document to facilitate alignment with the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA), to guide engagement and acceleration of adoption of digital technologies for teaching, learning, research, assessment and administration; strengthening digital literacy and skills for teachers and students; and building the capacity of AU Member states in digital infrastructure (networks and devices) for digital education. 5. The **African Continental Qualifications Framework** (ACQF) has been developed to facilitate mutual recognition for education and skills development. The ACQF is envisioned as a qualifications framework for the continent, based on the principles of: 6. Inclusiveness of all types of learning and levels of qualifications (all sub-systems of education and training); 7. Openness to learners’ and stakeholders’ needs, to policy learning and lessons from other qualifications frameworks; and 8. Innovation-readiness: notably the transformation of skills and learning in the context of digitalisation, greening and beyond Covid-19 reconstruction.   The objectives of the envisioned ACQF are:   1. Contribute to comparability, quality and transparency of qualifications and support people´s lifelong learning; 2. Facilitate recognition of diplomas and certificates, and support mobility (learners, workers, services); 3. Work in cooperation and complementarity with NQFs and RQFs and support the creation of an African education and qualifications space; 4. Promote cooperation, referencing between qualifications frameworks (national and regional) in Africa and worldwide.   Evidently, skills and qualifications of the people in Africa are crucial for the transformation of the continent and there the need attendant policy frameworks to facilitate mobility, portability and compatibility, as integral towards achieving regional integration and prosperity for all on the Continent.  The AUDA-NEPAD aims to engage in consultations for the development of an **African Occupational Standards Development Framework** to meet occupational demands and **improve employability prospects of learners and job seekers.** This framework will tackle crucial concerns, including the reliance of economic growth and the inclusiveness of digitalization processes and a just transition towards sustainability, through  1) developing and recognizing suitable skills within and beyond the continent as a facilitator of inclusive and sustainable growth trajectories. 2) Addressing the gap between the skills required by the labour market and the skills possessed by individuals, and 3) serving as a tool to assist Member states capacity building of institutional architecture, data collection, analysis and management through Technical advisory and implementation tools. | |
| **Rationale**  The prevailing circumstances among African youth, women, rural populations and migrants requires a systematic response that will address skills gaps and respond to increasing socio-economic challenges currently being experienced. This will need to be addressed through thorough research into the demands of the labour market and the need to align skills supply to meet the labour market demand. Whilst the Africa Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF) will enable the recognition of qualifications across the continent, qualifications levels, in and of themselves, do not increase employment or employability prospects of individuals, and productivity enhancement of enterprises. Rather it is a **combination of knowledge, skills and competencies** that are required in order to ensure that people are able to effectively carry out the functions of a particular job in the context of the environment and that enterprises are able to optimize the efficiency of its production of goods and services. These assignment exercise should help identify how member states could implement the ACQF and complement it with the AOSD to work in harmony and create a cohesive and efficient system, alignment of current standards, curriculum and training standards lending to improved employability and productivity outcomes. In this way, the AOSD will help to specify the occupational requirements and the ACQF serves to provide the structure for classifying and recognising the qualifications that demonstrate the attainment of these requirements. .  The focus therefore needs *to shift exclusively from qualifications levels to occupations and skills* as these directly link supply and demand and are an enabler of employability, productivity and economic growth. Adopting a sector-focused skills development approach to drive towards attainment of Agenda 2063 that is driven by industralisation and regional integration through trade and markets would assist in achieving the desired outcomes. Occupational standards are essential for using a common language in describing skills needs because they provide best practice and can serve as a common framework for workforce development and planning. The desired outcome is that the AOSD will provide guidance for TVET and skills development practitioners in close collaboration with the industry players, to align training delivery to workplace job roles, ensuring quality, supporting training and development, facilitating labour mobility and skills portability, enhancing recognition and accreditation, ensuring legal compliance, and promoting international comparability. | |
| **The objectives of the assignment**  The objective of the consultancy is to undertake a scoping exercise of what OS development mechanisms or frameworks exists at national exists at national, regional and international level and to propose key milestones and a roadmap for consultation with countries, key stakeholders and partners alike, building on existing regional coordination platforms and mechanisms, for the elaboration of an African Occupational Standards Development Framework, with attendant implementation support tools and guidelines  The scoping study should identify potential users, ways of development, utilization, maintenance and updating, and formats of the AOSD. The principle that should underpin the scoping is to look for opportunities to synergise initiatives where possible to avoid duplication. | |
| **Deliverables, scope of work, activities**  **Scope of Work:**   * ***Step 1: Establish need/niche for a Continental Occupational Standards Development Framework***:  Undertake consultations with key actors and stakeholders to assess the rationale and strategic positioning of a continental occupational standards development framework to help improve *alignment* between education management information systems and labour market data collection, analysis and usage to improve how TVET and skills development practitioners, in close collaboration with the industry players, align training delivery approaches to improve quality of their learners to be workforce-ready. The work done under the ACQF on occupations serves as good starting point. The consultations should include the RECs Secretariats, TVET players and authorities and representatives from industry bodies, employers and workers organizations * ***Step 2: Establish what exists***: Conduct a preliminary desk study to review existing AU frameworks (CESA; Continental TVET strategy; the ACQF), and any efforts undertaken in the development of occupational standards in specific sectors, other attendant and relevant regional frameworks addressing TVET and to what extent they address occupational demands; consider also sample of emerging practices at REC and national level as well as drawing on lessons from global north and south country frameworks. * ***Step 3: Scoping study***: facilitate expert communities of practice (to be convened by AUDA-NEPAD, to serve as a think- tank that helps to shape, share perspectives and expert input). The groups will comprise of key stakeholders comprised of public sector technical experts; from a selected sample of AU member states; TVET practitioners and authorities, private sector, employers' and workers’ organizations, academics, civil society and development partners. This phase should include a sample based analysis of national and regional development plans to identify priority growth sectors and occupations to recommend a sub-sector and a set of selected occupations along with a prototype which could be developed and a pilot could be conducted for demonstration of a proof of concept for possible further scaling to other sectors and occupations. The outcome of this study will culminate in a report presenting recommendations on how the process could proceed. * ***Step 4: Action planning***: Based on the Desk top study and Recommendations report from the scoping study, this should be a detailed exercise to generate a process approach and a roadmap with key milestones for a pilot along a chosen sector’s and occupations’ skills profiles; with clear identification of key implementation stakeholders in the selected country or region.   **Deliverables**  The consultant will:   1. Undertake mapping of existing definitions, methodologies and approaches for the development of occupational standards 2. Conduct extensive consultation through workshops, expert groups and communities of practice (key stakeholders); 3. Conduct a stakeholder mapping and analysis (public, private and development partners) 4. Draft scoping study 5. Assist AUDA-NEPAD in Development partner engagement to rally partners to support development of attendant tools and processes to support development and implementation of the AOSD | |
| **PROPOSED PAYMENT SCHEDULE**  (i) submission of inception report which includes a comprehensive compendium of existing frameworks/approaches at national and regional level (including mapping of existing definitions, methodologies and approaches for the development of occupational standards  (ii) 30% upon submission of the Stakeholder analysis report and engagement strategy Report on the pre-development consultation on the draft  (iii) 40% upon submission of the Scoping study report and recommendations from the post-development consultation  (iv) 30% upon submission of the Final report, roadmap and implementation strategy for piloting of an Final African Occupational Standards Development Framework | |
| **Location**  Remote and on-site stakeholder consultations | |
| **Timeframe of the assignment**  42 man-days in Six (6) months. | |
| **Deliverables/Reports/Milestones Schedule**  The Consultant will work directly with an assigned Programme Officer from the Directorate of Human Capital and Institutional Development and an assigned administrator and submit the following deliverables:       |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Time frame (by end of the period assigned) | Process Phase | Delivery | | * Month 1 (7 man-days) | * Inception planning | * Inception Report with attendant facilitation questionnaire to engage with stakeholders | | * Month 2 (7 man-days) | * Situational analysis | * Stakeholder analysis report and engagement strategy | | * Month 4 (14 man-days) | * Scoping study | * Scoping study report and recommendations | | * Month 6 ( 14 man-days) | * Action planning | * Final report, roadmap and implementation strategy | | |
| **Submission & approval of reports**  Consultant will provide monthly written reports to the Director: Human Capital and Institutional Development Reports shall be in English. | |
| ***Language requirements:***  The conduct of the work and reporting will be in English. Proficiency in two or more of the African Union working languages, will be an added value. | |
| **Person Days/Months**  The period of the consultancy is for seven (7) days a month, for six (6) months which shall commence on 1st June – 30 November 2024 | |
| **Governance, support and facilities to be provided by AUDA-NEPAD**  The consultant will be managed by an assigned Programme Officer from the Directorate of Human Capital and Institutional Development, reporting to the Director.   * The Director, Human Capital and Institutional development will be responsible for convening an independent peer review team to review all reports for approval. AUDA-NEPAD shall not provide the working tools such as laptop. Where necessary, should the consultant be required to report physically to AUDA-NEPAD offices, office space and other equipment relevant to the execution of the consultancy will be provided. * Costs of travel, accommodation for on-site assignment days only will be covered by AUDA-NEPAD * THE Consultant shall be responsible for all national taxes | |
| **Experience of the Individual**   1. Masters in Education and/or any other field relevant to development cooperation. 2. Experience working on Education, TVET and Skills development with a demonstrable track record in the training and development in the use of competency based approaches, with a minimum of 10 years in a technical lead position. 3. Demonstrable programme development and project management; research, analysis and report writing skills; 4. Good oral and written communication abilities, especially the capacity in dealing with all partners, demonstrating tact, determination and discretion. 5. Familiarity with international development issues - Familiarity with AU, AUDA-NEPAD ecosystem will be of advantage. | |
| **Copyrights**  Both data and materials used will be submitted to AUDA-NEPAD who retain copy rights to the report. Consultants may not divulge, extract or quote national data or make reference to the outcomes of this assignment in other work without the expressed written permission of AUDA-NEPAD. | |