

Terms of Reference

Soft Skills Training to Increase Youth Employability

LEBANON NATIONAL VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROGRAM (NVSP)

A. BACKGROUND

1. Young people in Lebanon are currently facing significant labor market challenges. Joblessness, defined as the share of the working-age population in either unemployment or economic inactivity, is high amongst youth, especially females. Around 29 percent of female and 20 percent of male youth are unemployed or inactive¹. The unemployment rate among 15-24 years old is particularly high, at 34 percent (compared to 11 percent of the labor force overall). These poor labor market outcomes could be explained by skill mismatches, as employers struggle to fill vacancies due to a shortage of job seekers with relevant qualifications and skills.² Indeed, the 2010 Investment Climate Assessment (ICA) identified skills as one of the main constraints to doing businesses for enterprises in Lebanon. In particular, many enterprises claim that Lebanese youth lack “soft skills”, or non-cognitive skills that range from leadership and team work to conflict resolution. Soft skills are believed to enable youth to work more efficiently and effectively at the workplace, potentially improving employers’ overall performance and productivity.
2. Soft skills are often developed through hands-on experience, including internships or volunteering work. Unfortunately, volunteerism amongst youth is not very common in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), as schools, universities and/or employers in the region do not see volunteerism as a priority. In recent years, however, the Lebanese Government (GoL) has shown commitment to promote volunteerism as a way to improve youth employability and enhance social cohesion, one of the end goals of job creation.³ For example, GoL issued a Decree (Number 8924/2012) in September 2012 and created a new extra curriculum program that requires secondary school students to complete 60 hours of civil work. In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), through its Volunteering Department, develops every year an annual action plan for the implementation of youth volunteer summer camps across Lebanon.
3. GoL has included the promotion of volunteerism in Lebanon as an objective in its National Social Development Strategy. To meet this objective, the World Bank, through funds from the State and Peace-Building Fund (SPF), supported the MOSA to implement the first phase of the National Volunteer Service Program (NVSP). The first phase of NVSP, which was implemented between 2013-2016, sought to increase youth civic engagement and improve social cohesion across communities and regions by: (i) expanding youth volunteerism among 15-24 year olds, particularly in communities other than their own; and (ii) improving the employability of youth through enhanced soft skills.

The first phase of NVSP successfully implemented all its activities. To date, around 6,500 Lebanese youth aged 15-24 and close to 150 NGOs, universities, schools and municipalities have been directly involved in the project’s activities. This includes more than 3,300 youth who have participated in the implementation of 51 volunteering projects throughout Lebanon. Of particular importance for this Terms of Reference (TORs) is the 20-hour soft-skills training curriculum and associated training manuals that were developed specifically for Lebanon, which benefited staff from those schools and universities that implemented NVSP

¹ World Bank (2013) “Jobs for Shared Prosperity: Time for Action in the Middle East and North Africa”. Washington, DC: World Bank.

² Ibid.

³ World Bank (2013) World Development Report on Jobs. Washington, DC: World Bank.

projects in the Summer of 2016 through a Training of Trainers (ToT), as well as 840 participating NVSP youth who participated in the soft skills training delivered by the trained staff.

4. Thanks to the NVSP success to-date, the SFP provided an additional financing of US\$2 million dollars to scale-up the project in the most vulnerable Lebanese communities hosting Syrian refugees (from now on “targeted communities”). The project’s second phase, which will be implemented by NGOs in 2017 and 2018, has three main components: (i) Capacity development, communications and outreach, which includes a capacity building training on project design and management for participating NGOs, as well as a soft skills training for participating youth volunteers; (ii) Youth volunteering for social stability and service delivery, including weekend activities and the Small Grants Programs (SGP) for selected NGOs; and (iii) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and program management.
5. Under Component 2, NVSP successfully implemented 10 projects with NGOs throughout Lebanon including 479 youth volunteers. NVSP envisages the provision of *at least* 20 hours of soft-skills training to those youths who participate in projects financed under the SGP, as a way to complement their volunteering experience and thus further enhance their employability. During the summer of 2017, the training was directly delivered to 434 volunteers who participated in NGO projects. For the year of 2018, NVSP envisages the recruitment of a locally hired firm, who would be in charge of providing the soft-skills training directly to participating youths, leveraging the NVSP soft skills training curriculum as well as training manuals mentioned above.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The overall objective of the SGP is to provide volunteering opportunities to both Lebanese and Syrian refugee youth living in the targeted communities through the financing of volunteering projects put forward by eligible NGOs.⁴ Each proposed project can include a requested budget of up to US\$25,000, and should: (i) contribute to social stability; (ii) improve social service delivery in the targeted communities, and (ii) build employability skills of the youth through the provision of soft-skills training.

All projects selected for financing under the SGP must: (i) be implemented in 2 months or less, during the summer of 2017; (ii) reflect the needs of the target community; (iii) recruit a minimum of 40 volunteers from the target community, and (iv) provide recruited volunteers *at least* 20 hours of training on soft-skills and 40 hours of volunteering work.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICES

In partnership with the MOSA and under the guidance of the World Bank, these TORs seek to recruit a local expert institution (from now on, “the provider”) to implement the NVSP soft-skills component. Specifically, the recruited firm will be responsible for:

- (i) Developing a plan for the delivery of the training sessions, which takes into account the selected project’s implementation dates, location (both geographic and delivery of actual training), number of youth, etc.
- (ii) Developing any required pedagogical support (i.e.: training manuals, lesson plans, training material, etc.), using the NVSP soft-skills training curriculum and leveraging/adjusting the training manuals mentioned above (e.g. constituting four modules, each with 5 one-hour lessons)

⁴ Eligible youth are Lebanese aged between 15-29 years who are registered in the NVSP online portal, which was created primarily to match volunteers with selected projects under the SGP. Eligible NGOs must: (i) be registered in the online portal; (ii) be legally registered and licensed for 2 years or more (at the Ministry of Interior); (iii) have experience in working with volunteers; (iii) have project management experience in implementing at least one project of similar budget size; (iv) show adequate administrative (availability of a Board of Director elected annually) and financial structure and procedures (availability of a Finance Management Officer and financial statements); and (v) have an institutional Bank account and ability to manage grant funds.

- (iii) Carrying out a series of training sessions targeting *at least* 1,080 volunteers from the selected 27 NGOs (from now on, “training beneficiaries”)
- (iv) Providing training beneficiaries (including NGOs representatives) ongoing and timely technical support during the implementation of their projects; and
- (v) Conducting a pre- and post- test survey with all training beneficiaries

Specifically, the selected provider must:

- a. **Carry out a series of training sessions for training beneficiaries.** Leveraging its vast experience designing and implementing soft-skills training, the selected provider must organize and carry out 20 hours of training sessions. The language of instruction must be Arabic. Specifically, the provider will be responsible for the training:
 - i. *Content and methodology:* Beyond covering the content related to the NVSP modules, the provider must work with the MOSA to include in each training session the following material: (i) the principles and objectives of volunteering and its benefits for the participating youth and the target community; (ii) the definition and importance of soft skills for improving youth employability; and (iii) an introduction to NVSP and in particular the SGP, leveraging its Operations Manual. The provider must draft and validate the training agenda with MOSA and the World Bank.

The training sessions must bridge theory with practice and include practical examples on how soft-skills can be applied to real-case scenarios. To do so, the provider must use interactive group exercises, participant presentations as well as customized case studies and role plays in the delivery of the training sessions.
 - ii. *Organization:* the selected provider will liaise with the selected NGOs to organize the training sessions. The NGO will be responsible to provide the physical space of the training. As for the selected provider, it will secure the needed equipment (i.e. stationeries materials and preparing and printing all relevant materials, including copies of PowerPoint presentations, readings and other supporting documents as well as trainers’ manuals).
 - iii. *Delivery, including certification and evaluation:* the provider must ensure that the training sessions cover all material and allow ample room for questions and answers. Training sessions must be held during daylight hours, and the provider must take daily attendance. Provider must also issue a certificate to all those participants who successfully completed the training. The provider must define the minimum attendance requirements for training certification. In addition, at the beginning (pre-test) and upon completion (post-test) of each set of training sessions for each IA, the provider must carry out an evaluation of the training and include the results of the evaluation in its final report (see Section E).
- b. **Provide training beneficiaries (including NGOs representative) ongoing and timely technical support during the implementation of their projects.** Upon request, the selected provider must provide training beneficiaries support and guidance on the training content. To this end, the provider must identify its point person (name, title, location) as well as the means of communication to be used (for example, emails, skype, social media, help desk), and provide this information to training beneficiaries. The provider must ensure that all enquiries are answered in a timely manner with clear, detailed instructions.

D. REQUIREMENTS

This assignment requires highly specialized services that must be delivered under an extremely tight deadline. Therefore, the following are the minimum requirements necessary to successfully carry out the services included in these TORs:

- A minimum of 5 years of experience in youth development and employability, especially in delivering training programs.
- Demonstrated capacity and experience organizing and delivering soft skills trainings. This includes having adequate human resources (See below on trainers' requirements) as well as all relevant training materials for participants readily available in both English and Arabic, including trainers' manuals as well as certification and monitoring mechanisms.
- Show adequate administrative (availability of a Board of Director selected annually) and financial structure and procedures (availability of a Financial Officer and ability to prepare periodical financial reports and yearly financial statements).
- Exposure to volunteering projects and management would be an asset.
- Ability to effectively liaise and establish excellent relationships with government agencies.
- Understanding of the needs of the private sector in Lebanon in terms of knowledge/skills would be a plus.
- Demonstrated capacity to deliver quality products and services under tight deadlines.
- Ability to effectively monitor and document, in Arabic and English, the provision of products and services.

In addition, and given the importance of the trainers' qualifications and experience on training outcomes, the provider must show proof that the assigned trainers:

- Have a bachelor's degree in education, economics, social science or related field. A Master's degree would be preferred.
- Have three years of teaching experience and/or experience delivering training for youth.
- Be a certified/accredited trainer, and have ample experience delivering soft skills trainings, would be a plus.
- Have excellent writing and verbal communication skills in Arabic and English.
- Be able to communicate and interact effectively with youth from all ages and backgrounds, including different confessions.
- Have excellent organizational skills and ability to work under tight deadlines and with a high level of independence.

E. TABLE OF OVERALL DELIVERABLES

The following table identifies the key tasks, deliverables and delivery time per activity to be carried out as part of these TORS.

Tasks	Deliverables	Delivery Time
Activity 1: Review the content of the shared modules by NVSP		
➤ Review of the shared soft-skills modules.	A detailed implementation/work plan, and pedagogical support	1 week
Activity 2: Organization of training sessions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify trainers who will be in charge of delivering training sessions ➤ Prepare and print all training material ➤ Design pre-post training assessment, in coordination with NVSP M&E Officer. 	A training agenda with detailed logistical information as well as a hard and soft copies of all supporting documents, including PowerPoint presentations, reading and other supporting documents, trainers' manuals, as well as the pre-post training assessment.	1 week
Activity 3: Delivery of Training sessions for 11 IAs		
➤ Conduct training sessions	Training sessions on soft skills for each of the 11 IAs. The volunteers of each IA shall receive 20 hours of soft skills training. The volunteers of each IA will be divided into two groups, each to be delivered separately.	2-3 weeks⁵
➤ Carry out training evaluation (pre- and post-training), in coordination with NVSP M&E Officer.	A detailed report with a summary of training objectives, activities, discussions, statistics, evaluation results and other relevant information. Attachment of copies of attendance sheets, evaluation forms, and certificates.	2-3 weeks
➤ Issuance of certificates	Contact information for ongoing technical support	
Activity 4: Delivery of Training sessions for 11 IAs		
➤ Conduct training sessions	Training sessions on soft skills for each of the 11 IAs. The volunteers of each IA shall receive 20 hours of soft skills training. The volunteers of each IA will be divided into two groups, each to be delivered separately.	2-3 weeks⁶
	A detailed report with a summary of training objectives, activities, discussions, statistics,	2-3 weeks

⁵ The provider is expected to form 6 teams, each constituting of a main trainer and an assistant, able to deliver trainings in parallel.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Carry out training evaluation (pre- and post-training), in coordination with NVSP M&E Officer. ➤ Issuance of certificates 	<p>evaluation results and other relevant information. Attachment of copies of attendance sheets, evaluation forms, and certificates.</p> <p>Contact information for ongoing technical support</p>	
Activity 5: Delivery of Training sessions for 5 IAs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct training sessions 	<p>Training sessions on soft skills for each of the 5 IAs. The volunteers of each IA shall receive 20 hours of soft skills training. The volunteers of each IA will be divided into two groups, each to be delivered separately.</p>	1-2 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Carry out training evaluation (pre- and post-training), in coordination with NVSP M&E Officer. ➤ Issuance of certificates 	<p>A detailed report with a summary of training objectives, activities, discussions, statistics, evaluation results and other relevant information. Attachment of copies of attendance sheets, evaluation forms, and certificates.</p> <p>Contact information for ongoing technical support</p>	1-2 weeks
Activity 6: Provision of technical support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Answer questions related to the trainings. 	Log with all requests/responses	Ongoing

F. DATA/SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

The training provider will be provided any project-related background document as needed. The PIU will facilitate the contacts and meetings with relevant institutions and officials which might be of importance for this assignment.

G. PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

The following table identifies the percentages of the total contract amount to be disbursed to the selected provider following the achievement/submission of the deliverables per activity identified in section E of these TORs.

Upon	Percentage of total contract amount
Signing of Contract	20%
Completion of deliverables of Activity 3	25%
Completion of deliverables of Activity 4	25%
Completion of deliverables of Activity 5	10%
Completion of deliverable of Activities 6	20%

H. DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

It is expected that this assignment takes 2 and a half months and run from **July 15, 2018** to **May 31, 2019**. During the contracted period, the selected provider will report to Marwa El Kik (melkik@nvsp-socialaffairs.com), the NVSP Manager.

I. APPLICATION DEADLINE

The deadline to submit technical and financial proposals for this assignment is **June 27, 2018**. The technical and financial proposals should be in sealed envelopes and delivered to National Volunteer Service Program (NVSP) offices in Badaro Street, **old** Ministry of Social Affairs building facing Credit Libanais bank.