

Terms of reference

For the situational analysis of quality assurance systems at selected vocational education and training institutes and capacity building on internal quality assurance for core trainers

Position: Lead national consultant

Project No.: 17.2058.0-001.00 ■ Output 2: 60%. Output 3: 40%

1. General background of the programme “Reform of TVET in Vietnam”

The joint Vietnamese-German technical cooperation programme “Reform of Technical Vocational Education and Training in Viet Nam II” (TVET Programme) aims to better align TVET in Viet Nam to the changing world of work. It is funded by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, BMZ) with counterpart funds from the Vietnamese Government. The implementing agencies are the GIZ and the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET) under the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA). In order to reach the project’s objective, three main outputs have to be achieved:

- Output 1: State actors, TVET staff, TVET institutes and the business sector are interconnected
- Output 2: The regulatory framework of TVET is aligned to the requirements of the changing world of work
- Output 3: The concept of High-Quality TVET institutes is successfully implemented in selected TVET institutes.

Thereby, the TVET Programme contributes to the improvement of the supply of demand-orientated qualified workforce in Viet Nam.

2. Background of the activity

The Vietnam Vocational Training Strategy 2011-2020 defines quality assurance and management as one of the nine key solutions towards a stronger vocational education and training (VET) system. It also identified specific objectives for the establishment of an accreditation system for the VET sector.

In 2017, the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) became the sole state management authority of the VET sector, taking over a system that was previously managed separately by MoLISA and the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). Under the MoLISA, the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET) advises MoLISA on its state management duties of the VET sector and is responsible for the management and implementation of public services in VET. As a Department of DVET, the Vietnam Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Agency (VETA) executes state management duties in VET quality accreditation and assurance.

Between 2017 and 2020, several new developments took place to strengthen the legal framework on VET quality accreditation, and to promote a stronger quality culture among VET institutes. These new developments result from deliberate efforts from both VET state management authorities and VET institutes to gain credible recognition for VET quality and signals an ever growing interest and focus on quality in the VET sector.

2.1. VET quality assurance and quality accreditation policies

The primary normative documents regulating the quality accreditation process of VET training programmes and VET service providers include:

- Circular 15/2017-BLDTBXH issued in 2017, which defines the criteria and standards for the accreditation of VET institutes and VET programmes
- Circular 28/2017-BLDTBXH issued in 2017, which regulates the establishment and operation of quality assurance systems at VET institutes
- Circular 27/2018-BLDTBXH issued in 2018, which regulates the quality accreditation cycle and procedures, and the licensing of VET accreditors.
- Decree 1313/VBHN-BLDTBXH issued in 2019, which regulates the licensing and operations of VET accreditation agencies and accreditors

2.2. VET quality assurance and quality accreditation practices

The 2014 VET law specifies that the objectives of VET accreditation are i) to ensure and improve quality in VET, and ii) to verify the level of achievements against predefined VET targets within a set period of time. In line with this vision, which recognizes the link between internal quality assurance and accreditation, recent developments showed efforts to both establish a functional accreditation system and promote a stronger quality culture among VET institutes.

a) Quality assurance

By 2019, around 32% of VET colleges nationwide (130/400) were reported to have established an internal quality assurance system. The rate is lower among secondary VET schools. No data was available for VET centers.

VETA acknowledges the importance of internal quality assurance and the rising demand for a stronger quality culture as VET institutes are granted greater autonomy while facing ever greater competition. Since 2014-2015 VETA has developed a training programme on quality assurance and trained an estimated 700 VET teachers and managers. A core team of 40 multipliers was established, most of whom are experienced staff of quality assurance departments from various VET institutes nationwide to act as trainers of the program.

International development cooperation programmes in the VET sector also contributed to capacity development in the field of quality assurance. Most popular inputs include:

- International skills partnerships on Quality Assurance between DVET and the British Council
- Quality Assurance training module from the Centre for Advanced management (CAM-series) under the Canadian-funded Vietnam Skills for Employability Project (VSEP)
- GIZ's training programmes from RECOTVET and the programme "Reform of TVET in Vietnam".

b) Quality accreditation

In 2018 & 2019, additional legislations were developed to regulate the licensing and operation of accreditation agencies and accreditors, and to guide the implementation of the accreditation process. In 2019, the two first VET accreditation agencies were licensed, and by 2020, a total of four agencies were operational.

The accreditation process includes the three following steps, which are applicable for both VET service providers and VET programmes:

- i) Self-assessment by the VET service provider
- ii) Assessment by an external accreditation agency
- iii) Approval of the external assessment and certification for the accredited VET institute/programme

In 2019, less than 30% of VET institutes nationwide submitted their self-assessment reports to DVET. Nevertheless, the self-assessment rate among colleges reached over 50%, the highest level since 2017. Self-assessment of training programmes was carried out by a much smaller number of VET institutes. Only 139 VET institutes nationwide self-assessed a total 666 training programmes.

In 2020, the four newly established accreditation agencies carried out the accreditation process for 70-80 VET institutes nationwide.

3. Rationale and objectives of the consultancy

Against the above background of VET quality assurance and accreditation, during consultations with the programme "Reform of TVET in Vietnam", DVET and VETA expressed the need for support to:

- i) Gather evidence on quality assurance systems and the accreditation process carried out by VET institutes. This data helps DVET/VETA improve its state management functions, especially its policymaking in the field of VET quality management
- ii) Harmonize the connection between internal quality assurance and accreditation for VET institutes

- iii) Enhance DVET/VETA capacity in providing training support for VET institutes in quality assurance
- iv) Contribute evidence-based recommendations with regards to VET quality management for the development of the 2020-2030 VET strategy

Responses to DVET/VETA's request could contribute to Output 2 i.e. strengthening VET regulatory framework in the context of the changing world of work and Output 3 i.e. anchoring GIZ's inputs in the development of high-quality VET institutes within the results matrix of the Programme "Reform of TVET in Vietnam". With this rationale, the consultancy within its ToR is designed to lead a team of national consultants to work towards the following objectives:

- 1) Provide a situational analysis on the quality assurance systems at selected VET institutes and recommendations to enhance capacity building for VET practitioners
- 2) Provide a situational analysis on the accreditation process experienced by selected VET institutes and recommendations to improve VETA's management and policymaking capacity in VET quality accreditation
- 3) Provide a training needs analysis to identify the gaps in training and training needs among VET managers and quality assurance staff at selected VET institutes
- 4) Provide technical advice for the revision of the VETA's existing training package on quality assurance/accreditation for VET practitioners with the view to integrating GIZ inputs
- 5) Provide coaching and capacity building for core trainers identified by VETA to ensure successful delivery of VETA's revised training package on quality assurance/accreditation.

4. Activities and deliverables

The following section provides a non-exhaustive description of the activities to be carried out and expected outputs of the lead consultant.

4.1. Activity 1: Situational analysis and training needs analysis

The implementation of the situational analysis and training needs analysis tentatively includes three main steps: i) methodology and tools development, ii) field survey at selected VET institutes, and iii) data analysis and reporting.

4.1.1. Methodology and tools development

- A comprehensive set of research methodology and tools is developed for:
 - the situational analysis on quality assurance systems at selected VET institutes
 - the situational analysis on the accreditation process experienced by selected VET institutes
 - the training needs analysis in quality assurance/accreditation at selected VET institutes
- Coaching sessions are provided for team members on survey methods.

4.1.2. Field survey at selected VET institutes

- A survey is conducted at selected VET institutes. Data is collected for analysis and reporting.
- Other team members are coordinated and supported

4.1.3. Data analysis, reporting and recommendations

- The final report submitted to the Programme “Reform of TVET in Vietnam” includes but is not limited to the following contents:
 - Findings on quality assurance systems available at selected VET institutes and ensuing recommendations for policymaking/sustainable capacity building
 - Findings on the accreditation process carried out at the surveyed VET institutes, and recommendations to improve state management functions and policy making in VET accreditation
 - Findings on training gaps and training needs in quality assurance among of VET personnel (managers, quality assurance staff) at selected VET institutes and recommendations for policymaking/capacity development
- PowerPoint presentation(s) on the research findings and accompanying handout materials are available for workshops/working sessions organized jointly by the programme “Reform of TVET in Vietnam” and DVET/VETA

4.2. Activity 2: Review of available in-service training materials on quality assurance for VET practitioners

The development of an enhanced training package for VETA would benefit from a review of VETA’s training programme and other comparable training programmes. It is also necessary to re-examine existing GIZ training contents to determine their relevance and options for integration in the updated VETA product.

The following deliverables are expected from the consultancy:

4.2.1. Review of available in-service training programmes on quality assurance for VET practitioners

- The review provides an overview of relevant training programmes and recommendations for the updating of VETA’s training package

4.2.2. Revision of GIZ training contents

- Revision of GIZ available training contents, including Module IV on quality assurance and the Quality toolbox for better TVET delivery
- Identification of relevant contents to be integrated into VETA training package, either as organic contents of the final product, or as a top-up module

4.3. Activity 3: Technical advisory for the revision of VETA's training package and capacity building for core trainers

The revision of VETA's training package is a capacity development exercise whereby a team of core trainers selected by VETA work together to revise/build training content and test deliver the updated training package under the coaching and supervision of the lead consultant. The final product will undergo a rigorous VETA-led appraisal process before it can be adopted for continued large-scale dissemination. The consultancy is expected to produce the following deliverables:

4.3.1. Technical advisory for the revision of VETA's training package

On the basis of findings from the above-mentioned study (Activity 4.1) and comparative review of training programmes on quality assurance (Activity 4.2) the lead consultant provides technical advice on the methodology and approach to VETA and team members to inform the process of revising VETA's training package. He/she subsequently coordinates the division of work among team members and provides regular coaching during the process of content revision/development. Team members submit their work on a regular basis, and upon receiving feedback and inputs from the lead consultant, finalize their part(s) of the training package.

The lead consultant is expected to produce the following deliverables:

- Technical advice on the methodology and approach to revise VETA's training package is communicated to VETA, team members and the programme "Reform of TVET in Vietnam"
- Components of the updated training package (e.g. textbook, lesson plans, etc.) are identified in consultation with the programme "Reform of TVET in Vietnam", VETA and team members
- Regular coaching is provided to a team of 10-12 core trainers during the process of training material development
- Proven proof of inputs (comments, advice, revision, etc.) given to training materials developed by the team of core trainers
- Attendance of working sessions/consultation meetings with VETA representatives during the process of training content development/revision

4.3.2. Pilot training delivery and appraisal of the final training package

- Class observation tools are developed to provide feedback for pilot training
- Attendance of pilot training workshops and subsequent coaching for core trainers
- Attendance of appraisal workshop, and subsequent revision of team members' work performed upon recommendations from the appraisal committee.

5. Required qualifications

The lead national consultant is expected to have the following qualifications/experiences:

- A bachelor's degree and/or above educational management, adult education, educational sciences, business administration or related field of study
- A minimum of 20 years of work experience in the education/VET sector, at least 05 of which in senior technical/management positions
- Excellent knowledge of the VET sector and working relations with its stakeholders (institutional level, state management authorities at central and provincial levels, etc)
- Proven experience in VET school development in and quality assurance issues
- Proven experience in curriculum development, research and training needs analysis, VET training methodology and instructional supervision,
- Extensive experience working for international donors in the VET sector
- Knowledge of GIZ interventions in the VET sector an asset
- Proven capacity building experience as a trainer/coach for VET teachers/managers
- Excellent research/reporting/writing skills in English and Vietnamese

6. Timeline, location and estimated working days

- **Timeline:** The consultancy is expected to be carried out between August 10th, 2021 and May 30th, 2022.
- **Location:** The consultancy includes home-based work, and some level of traveling. When travelling is indicated, the calculation is as follows:
 - **Field survey:** Air travel is not required. The consultant is to identify 02 colleges within car-driving distance, one of which is a GIZ partner.
 - **Workshops/meetings:** a total of 04 workshops/meeting will be held in either Hanoi or HCMC.
- **Working days:**
 - An estimated 89 working days and 29 travel days are needed to carry out the tasks under this ToR. Working days and travel days are calculated separately. For instance, one working day and one travel day are calculated for the consultant when he/she conducts a one-day survey outside of his/her living area.

The following table provides a summary of tentative deliverables and deadlines to be achieved by the consultancy

	Activity	Deliverables	Tentative deadline
Activity 1: Situational analysis and training needs analysis			
1.1	Methodology and tools development	Research methodology and literature review	10-Aug
		Set of research tools is developed, team researchers are interviewed	20-Aug
		Set of tools is tested and finalized for the research	22-Aug
		Coaching sessions on survey methods, tools and survey plan are provided for surveyors	25-Aug
1.2	Field survey at VET institutes	Survey is conducted at 02 VET institutes in areas not requiring air transport	30-Aug
1.3	Data analysis & reporting	Data generated from an estimated 12 colleges are collected from surveyors and analyzed	31-Aug
		Report on findings and recommendations are submitted to GIZ	15-Sep
		PPP and handouts are developed for workshops	20-Sep
Activity 1. Estimated working days: 40 ▪ Estimated travel days: 04			
Activity 2: Review of in-service training materials on quality assurance for VET practitioners			
2.1	Review of comparable training materials	A paper/report is produced with findings and recommendations for the updating of VETA's training programme	30-Sep
2.2	Revision of GIZ materials	GIZ materials are revised to ensure relevance and accuracy of language (VNM)	15-Oct
		A compilation of GIZ training materials is produced and handed over to VETA/GIZ	
Activity 2. Estimated working day: 16 ▪ Estimated travel days: 00			
Activity 3: Technical advisory for the revision of VETA training programme and capacity development for core trainers			
3.1	Technical advice for the revision of VETA training package	Methodology and approach for the revision given to GIZ, VETA and team members. Training materials developed by core trainers revised on a regular basis	15-Nov
		Working sessions/consultation workshop(s) attended with VETA representatives	20-Oct
3.2	Pilot training delivery and appraisal of training package	Pilot training and appraisal workshops attended, and feedback/coaching provided to core trainers	15-Feb
		Revision of team members' work upon evaluation from appraisal's committee	30-Mar
Activity 3. Estimated working days: 33 ▪ Estimated travel days: 25			
Total estimated number of working days: 89 ■ Total estimated number of travel days: 29			

7. GIZ rules and other guidelines

Office Space

Office space for the consultant will not be provided by the contracting party.

Incidental travel costs

All travel costs will be reimbursed according to GIZ rules and regulations. Travel needs prior approval by the manager of TVET Programme.

Expenditure verification

As per GIZ guidelines and requirements.

Data protection

Personal data will be processed on behalf of the client. This includes data on year of birth, employment situation, opinions, qualification data, gender and salary. Therefore, an agreement on "Outsourcing of data processing (AuV)" will be concluded with the contractor in accordance with Art. 28 GDPR. For this purpose, the technical and organizational measures (TOM) for compliance with the data protection requirements must be outlined prior to conclusion of the contract. If the contractor has already been audited by GIZ in the past, an update in accordance with GDPR must nevertheless be sent. After a positive check, the contract is concluded with the AuV attachment.

Other Provisions

- Estimates for travel costs in the proposal should be based on the most economic option; in particular flight tickets (economy class for national flights).
- The contractor will provide information for monitoring and evaluation to the project manager as required.
- The consultant will use the communication (e.g. power point presentations) and reporting (e.g. final reports) templates provided to him/her by GIZ.