

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Education
Secondary and Higher Education Division
Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education
Learning Acceleration in Secondary Education (LAISE) Project
(IDA Credit No. 74120- BD)
Terms of Reference (ToR)

**Assignment Title: Reviewing the pilot program of introducing vocational courses in 640
general schools/madrasas
(Package No. SD-18)**

1. Background

Background and Project Brief of the LAISE Project

The Learning Acceleration in Secondary Education (LAISE) Project (October 2023–September 2028), being implemented by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) under the Secondary and Higher Education Division (SHED) with support from the World Bank, aims to improve student learning outcomes, retention, and system resilience in secondary education. LAISE responds to Bangladesh's progress in education and the ongoing challenges of quality, equity, and resilience, particularly after the learning setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. LAISE Project aims to address learning losses, prepare students for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and ensure that education remains relevant to future job markets. This transformative vision positions the LAISE Project as a critical intervention for advancing Bangladesh's human capital development and achieving its long-term socioeconomic goals.

LAISE is a World Bank-aided hybrid project comprising of a Program-For-Results (PforR) component of \$280 million, allocated across 8 Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs), and a Technical Assistance component (TA) of \$20 million using the Investment Project Financing (IPF) instrument. The project implementation period is five years (October 2023 to September 2028), which syncs with the duration of the Government's Secondary Education Program (SEP).

The Program Development Objective (PDO) is to improve student learning and retention, and build system resilience in secondary education. There are four PDO indicators:

- PDO 1: Students meeting basic proficiency in Grade 8 in Maths and Bangla increases respectively to 65% and 90% in 2028 (Baseline 28.70 and 66.30: BES 2021)
- PDO 2: Secondary level Grade 10 (of those started in Grade 6) retention rate increased to 74 % in 2028 (Baseline 2021, 72% - BES 2021)
- PDO 3: At least 40% secondary students actively using blended learning programs by 2028.
- PDO 4: Students in targeted schools (at least 45,000) exhibiting improved climate change mindsets increase at least 30% by 2028 over baseline (to be determined).

The project has three output areas, which are as below:



1. Result Area 1: Student support for improved learning, retention, and resilience
2. Result Area 2: Improved teacher competency
3. Result Area 3: Improved secondary systems and resilience

In line with the National Education Policy 2010, which emphasizes expansion of pre-vocational and vocational education at the secondary level, the Secondary Education Sector Investment Program (SESIP) under DSHE piloted vocational education in 640 general secondary institutions (551 schools and 89 madrasahs).

The pilot included:

- Introduction of 10 vocational trades
- Provision of lab infrastructure and equipment
- Recruitment of vocational teachers and lab assistants
- Implementation of pre-vocational (Grades VI–VIII) and vocational (Grades IX–X) streams

While the initiative generated significant interest, implementation yielded mixed results, including:

- Low and uneven student enrolment
- Shortage and high turnover of trade instructors
- Institutional rigidity, especially in government schools
- Underutilization and maintenance issues of equipment

Given the Government's priority to expand vocational education in the general stream, and as mandated in the LAISE program document under the result area 3, a comprehensive review study is required to assess the pilot experience, identify bottlenecks, and recommend a scalable model for future expansion. DHSE intends to apply a portion of the said credit to engage a firm ("Consultants") for reviewing the pilot program of introducing vocational courses in 640 general schools/madrasahs.

2. Objectives of the Assignment

2.1 General Objective

To evaluate the design, implementation, and outcomes of the vocational pilot program in 640 institutions (piloted under SESIP of DSHE) and provide evidence-based recommendations for scaling vocational education in general secondary education.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The study will:

1. Assess the design and planning of the pilot program
2. Evaluate the implementation effectiveness across institutions
3. Analyze student enrolment, participation, and outcomes



4. Examine the availability, quality, and retention of vocational teachers and lab assistants
5. Assess infrastructure, equipment utilization, and maintenance systems
6. Identify institutional, administrative, and policy constraints
7. Document good practices and successful models
8. Estimate resource requirements (financial, infrastructure, HR) for scaling
9. Recommend a feasible and sustainable scale-up strategy

3. Scope of Work

The assignment will cover the following key areas:

3.1 Program Design and Relevance

- Rationale for trade selection
- Alignment with labor market demand and NEP 2010
- Institutional selection criteria

3.2 Implementation Assessment

- Status of infrastructure (labs, classrooms)
- Availability and functionality of equipment
- Institutional readiness and support systems

3.3 Student Participation and Performance

- Enrolment trends (by gender, region, type of institution)
- Attendance, completion, and dropout rates
- Student perceptions and career aspirations

3.4 Human Resource Assessment

- Availability and deployment of vocational teachers
- Recruitment challenges (NTRCA and others)
- Teacher retention and turnover
- Training and competency of instructors

3.5 Institutional and Administrative Issues

- Manpower structure constraints
- Governance and coordination challenges
- Role of DSHE, BTEB, DTE, NTRCA, and institutions

3.6 Equipment and Maintenance

- Utilization of supplied equipment



- Maintenance practices and challenges
- Sustainability of lab operations

3.7 Financial and Cost Analysis

- Cost of infrastructure and equipment
- Operational costs
- Cost implications for nationwide expansion

3.8 Comparative Performance Analysis

- Schools vs madrasahs
- Government vs non-government institutions
- High-performing vs low-performing institutions

3.9 Stakeholder Consultation

- Students, teachers, head teachers
- Parents and School Management Committees
- Employers/industry representatives (if applicable)

4. Methodology

The study will adopt a mixed-method approach:

4.1 Quantitative Methods

- Analysis of administrative and EMIS data
- Structured surveys (students, teachers, institutions)

4.2 Qualitative Methods

- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
- Case studies of selected institutions

4.3 Field Visits

- Representative sample of institutions across divisions

4.4 Analytical Framework

- Efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and sustainability analysis
- Benchmarking with national and international practices

5. Expected Outcomes

The study will:

- Provide clear evidence on pilot performance
- Identify systemic bottlenecks and risks

- Offer costed and practical scale-up options
- Support policy decisions for nationwide expansion of vocational education

6. Consultants Team Composition

6.1 Key Experts

The broad qualifications of the Key Experts are given below. The responsibilities shall be assigned by the Consultants to complete all the deliverables in a professional manner:

1. Team Leader (TVET/Education Specialist)

Educational Qualification: Master's degree in TVET/education, economics, or related field. PhD and/or degree/diploma in the relevant field will be considered as an added qualification.

Experience: 10 years of professional experience in vocational/secondary education, including 3 similar assignments, or 3 years of professional experience leading large-scale education program evaluation initiatives. Experience in TVET program evaluation will be treated as an added qualification.

Key Responsibilities: The Team Leader / Project Manager will be responsible for providing overall leadership, strategic direction, and day-to-day management of the assignment. This includes leading the inception phase (methodology, sampling strategy, work plan, data collection tools etc.); provide strategic oversight of the evaluation framework, coordinate and supervise all experts; lead stakeholder engagement; oversee data quality and reporting; lead preparation of inception, interim, draft final, and final reports; present findings in dissemination workshop.

2. Vocational Education Specialist

Educational Qualification: B.Sc. in Engineering or equivalent degree. PhD and/or degree/diploma in the relevant field will be considered as an added qualification.

Experience: 15 years of experience in TVET education, curriculum, training systems etc. Experience in TVET program evaluation will be treated as an added qualification.

Key Responsibilities: Technical lead on TVET components, Review program design, Assess vocational curriculum and delivery; Evaluate lab functionality and equipment usage; Provide technical inputs for scaling strategy: Trade expansion priorities; Standards for labs, equipment, and instructors.

3. Industry-academia collaboration Expert

Educational Qualification: Master's Degree in Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Economics, Social Sciences, Development Studies, Business Administration, Public Policy, or a related discipline.

Experience: 10 years of professional experience in secondary education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), skills development, industry engagement, workforce development, training systems, or related fields. Demonstrated experience in establishing or facilitating collaboration between educational institutions and industry partners.





Key Responsibilities: Provide technical leadership in assessing the integration of vocational courses within the general secondary education system. Evaluate the implementation of vocational courses at the school and madrasah levels, including industry engagement, practical training arrangements, and stakeholder participation. Analyze student participation, retention, and outcomes, including differences across school types (schools versus madrasahs; government versus non-government institutions). Identify administrative, operational, and institutional challenges affecting the implementation and sustainability of vocational education initiatives.

6.2 Non-Key Experts

In addition to key experts, the following non-key expert/staff may be required to deliver the service. Indicative non-key staff is a guideline for the consultants. However, the Consultants are free to make their own estimate to propose non-key staff.

1. Quantitative Data Analyst/Statistician

Educational Qualification: BSc in computer engineering or Statistics, Data Science, Sociology, or related field. PhD in related fields will be considered as an added qualification.

Experience: 5 years' experience in statistical software (e.g., SPSS, STATA, R, etc.). Experience with datasets, education assessment, and sampling strategies.

Key Responsibilities: Design data collection tools and protocols (including digital platforms if applicable); Data cleaning, statistical analysis; Perform statistical analysis of the pilot program; Generate tables, visualizations, and contribute to data-driven sections of reports; Support cost estimation modeling for scale-up.

2. Qualitative Research Specialist

Educational Qualification: Master's in Statistics, Sociology, Education, or any related field. PhD in related fields will be considered as an added qualification.

Experience: 5 years experience in thematic analysis and qualitative coding software (e.g., NVivo, Atlas.ti etc.).

3. Enumerators and coordinators: To be proposed by the Firm.

6.3 Key & Non-Key Experts Inputs

The indicative staff inputs are tabulated below:

Sl.	Key Experts	Inputs in month		
		No	Man-month	Total (mm)
1	Team Leader (TVET/Education Specialist)	1	6	6
2	Vocational Education Specialist	1	4	4
3	Industry-academia collaboration Expert	1	4	4
	Total Key-Staff Inputs			14
	Non-Key Experts/Other Experts			

1	Quantitative Data Analyst/ Statistician	1	4	4
2	Qualitative Research Specialist	1	3	2
	Total Non-Key-Staff Inputs			06
	Total Staff Inputs (Key + non-Key)			20

Total estimated key experts' input is **14-man months**.

Note:

- The Consultants shall review the scope of services and may propose their own requirements for Key Experts and support staff necessary for satisfactory completion of the assignment.*
- The Financial Proposal shall include all direct and indirect costs required to perform the services.*
- The proposed number of experts for each position shall be consistent with the Technical Proposal.*

7. Duration of the Assignment

The duration of the assignment will be **06 Months**.

8. Deliverables

The following table outlines the key deliverables of the assignment, which constitute the outputs of activities specified under the Scope of Services.

Note: T0 refers to the date of commencement of the Contract.

SL.	Deliverable	Description	Submission Deadline
8.1	Inception Report	- Detailed methodology - Sampling design - Data collection tools - Work plan	T1 = T0 + 0.5 month
8.2	Interim Report	Preliminary findings and analysis	T2 = T0 + 3.5 months
8.3	Draft Final Report	- Comprehensive findings - Bottleneck analysis - Recommendations	T4 = T0 + 5.5 months
8.4	Final Report	- Incorporating stakeholder feedback - Executive summary and policy brief	T5 = T0 + 6.0 months
8.5	Presentation/Dissemination Workshop	Presentation to SHED, DSHE, and stakeholders	T6 = T0 + 6.0 months

9. Management of The Assignment

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The Client for the assignment will be the Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The assignment focal points will be the Project Director, Learning Acceleration in Secondary Education (LAISE) Project. The consultants will closely coordinate with SHED, DSHE, Relevant agencies (e.g., DTE, BTEB, NTRCA etc. The general obligations are as follows:

9.1. To be provided by the Client

The Client will make available all relevant documents/reports, documents, facilitate access to institutions and data for the Consultants; support stakeholder coordination; designate counterpart personnel; and provide support facilities to the individual experts working in the assignment.

9.2. To be provided by the Consultants

During the assignment, the Consultants shall be fully responsible for providing all necessary facilities, personnel, and logistical support required to fulfill the contractual obligations. This shall include, but not be limited to, backstopping experts, support staff, and adequate office facilities (including office space with telephone, internet connectivity, and related services), office equipment (such as desktops/laptops, printers, scanners), office supplies, and any other equipment and materials required for effective implementation of the assignment.

The Consultants shall make their own arrangements for all types of transportation required for the assignment. All such requirements shall be clearly described in the Technical Proposal, and the associated costs shall be included in the Financial Proposal.

10. Selection Method

The consultants will be selected using the **Consultants' Qualifications -based Selection (CQS)** method as set for in the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016, revised November 2020.

