

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

Project Name: INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION AGENCY (IVA) SERVICES

Loan No. /Credit No. / Grant No:

Assignment Title: INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION AGENCY (IVA) SERVICES

Reference No. [JO-MOE-67052-CS-QCBS](#)

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Jordan Education Reform Support Program-for-Results (JERSP). Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services to the ministry.

The consulting services is to carry out a thorough INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION AGENCY (IVA) SERVICES.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found on the following websites: [www.moe.gov.jo/Bidding/ International Bidding](http://www.moe.gov.jo/Bidding/InternationalBidding)

Jordan's Education Reform Support Program supports a sub-portion of the government program which is based on the five-year National Education Sector Plan (NESP), which is embedded in the broader National Human Resources Development Strategy 2016-2025 (NHRDS). The NHRDS cuts across all education levels with strategic objectives categorized into five cross-cutting themes: access, quality, accountability, innovation, and mindset. The NESP narrows in on these themes for ECE, basic, and secondary education, and prioritizes a set of reform-related solutions to (a) increase KG2 capacity and enrolment while exploring innovative financing approaches to ECE, (b) improve the provision of basic and secondary education services to all Jordanian and non-Jordanian children, (c) improve the quality of education through the professionalization of the teaching profession, curriculum reform, rationalization of schools, and revision of national student assessment systems, including the Tawjihi, and (d) strengthen governance throughout the system.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are: (1) consulting firm qualifications and past experience in INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION AGENCY (IVA) SERVICES, (2) relevant experience in at least two countries, (3)

relevant implementation experience in at least one country. (ii) Relevant and strong staff experience in working on developing strategy.

The interested firm that they are qualified to this EOI should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services, and should include brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, summaries of the firm's capability, availability of appropriate skills among key staff with short biographies (one paragraph), availability of resources, and snapshots of relevant professional experience.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

Only short-listed Consultants will be subsequently asked to submit their technical and financial proposals as per templates of the Request for Proposals.

The Consultants will be selected in accordance with the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" July 2016 revised November 2017 and August 2018 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the Quality Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method as set in the "Procurement Regulations".

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours (0830 to 1530 hours).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by October 24th, 2023 by 13:00 p.m. (Jordan time).

Ministry of Education

Attn: Eng. Raed Khlaifat

Development Coordination Unit

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Terms of Reference

For INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION AGENCY (IVA) SERVICES
Education Reform Support Program
Ministry of Education
Jordan

I. Background

The Government of Jordan represented by the Ministry of Education (MOE) has remained steadfastly committed to providing all children, regardless of nationality, access to a quality education that is equitable and inclusive, especially in regard to refugees, gender and children with disabilities. At the same time, however, severe economic stress from the Syrian refugee crisis in 2012 continues to put enormous strain on the government's ability to provide public services, including health and education. To make matters worse, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has constricted the national budget even more and further reduced the government's capacity to deliver quality education for all, which enforced education delivery shift into e-learning.

This high demand and persisting needs to incorporate advanced resources are affecting all education sector parameters and requiring the mainstreaming of competent resources to strengthen the system and build the infrastructure and capacities of staff to effectively operationalize and acquaint to the education progression as to ensure equitable and quality driven education to all students. Without having such good resources, MOE cannot cope with the increasing demand of education equity and quality improvement, along with advancing its improvement.

The **World Bank** stepped in to support MOE through the ***“Jordan Education Reform Support Program”*** under the Program for Results initiative with the main objective of expanding access to early childhood education, and improving student

assessment and teaching and learning conditions for Jordanian and Syrian refugee children.

The program started in December 2017 with a total loan budget of USD 200 million financed by the IBRD and GCF and distributed as follows:

- USD 192 million – P4R: Intended to support the MOE Education Strategic Plan
- USD 8 million – IPF: Intended to cover technical assistance activities that would support the achievement of the Disbursement-Linked Indicators (DLIs)

The P4R support strongly aligns and corresponds to the 4 Key Result Areas of the Education Strategic Plan ESP as follows:

Result Area 1: Expanded access and improved quality of ECE early childhood education

Result Area 2: Improved teaching and learning conditions

Result Area 3: Reformed student assessment and certification system

Result Area 4: Strengthened education management system

During June 2020 the World Bank approved restructuring the program and added USD 100 million to continue supporting MOE in the implementation of the ESP and ensure effective education continuity and preparedness during and post the emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Additional Financing specifically enhances support for the original result areas and introduces COVID-19 responsive modifications in the following areas:

- MOE redoubled its efforts to increase KG2 access with aim of **universal access** for Jordanian and Syrian children
- MOE expanded efforts to improve the school learning environment **across all public schools** to increase retention of vulnerable Jordanian and Syrian students
- MOE revised its student assessment reform strategy to **include digitization** of assessments in addition to revamping their content
- In response to the **COVID-19 crisis**, MOE has requested support for the Sustainability Phase of the Education During Emergency Plan 2020/2022, with a focus on integrating **distance learning** and classroom learning into **sustained blended learning**

The Disbursement Linked Results (DLR) following the additional financing and restructuring of the P4R in 2020 are included in Annex 1.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

Jordan's Education Reform Support Program supports a sub-portion of the government program which is based on the five-year National Education Sector Plan (NESP), which is embedded in the broader National Human Resources Development Strategy 2016-2025 (NHRDS). The NHRDS cuts across all education levels with strategic objectives categorized into five cross-cutting themes: access, quality, accountability, innovation, and mindset. The NESP narrows in on these themes for ECE, basic, and secondary education, and prioritizes a set of reform-related solutions to (a) increase KG2 capacity and enrolment while exploring innovative financing approaches to ECE, (b) improve the provision of basic and secondary education services to all Jordanian and non-Jordanian children, (c) improve the quality of education through the professionalization of the teaching profession, curriculum reform, rationalization of schools, and revision of national student assessment systems, including the Tawjihi, and (d) strengthen governance throughout the system. A cross-cutting theme of the NHRDS responds to the immediate need for improving the quality and access to education services for Syrian refugee children, and to make the Jordanian education system more resilient to external and internal challenges. This focus is essential for building education systems that nurture greater social cohesion and allow for equal opportunities for all children. The NESP has been prepared in full coordination with the donor partners in Jordan and provides the bridge between the NHRDS vision and the GOJ and donor interventions.

1. The program supports a sub-portion of the government program (NESP), and seeks to achieve the following outcomes under the following Result Areas:
 - i. The first Result Area is **expanded access and improved quality of early childhood education**. This includes increasing access to KG by supporting expansion in public provision, and providing technical assistance to help the government set up public-private partnerships (PPPs) . It also includes supporting the development and implementation of a harmonized quality assurance system for public and private KGs, and rolling out of an in-service training program to improve teaching practices in KG,

- ii. The second Result Area aims to achieve **improved teaching and learning conditions**. The mechanism to achieve this goal is a focus on improving the school physical environment and the capacity of teachers and school leaders, and fostering positive student and teacher behavior and civic awareness toward schools and their communities,
 - iii. The third Result Area is a **reformed student assessment and certification system** that will focus on strengthening the MOE's ability to measure and monitor student learning at all grade levels and to bridge the gap between learning and certification. This notably includes the reform of Tawjihi and the institutionalization of an early grade diagnostic learning assessment,
 - iv. The fourth Result Area is **strengthened education system management** by focusing on supporting MOE and strengthening its capacity to manage an increasing number of schools and students. The focus of this result area is to provide and enhance the
2. The objective of the consultancy is to verify results achievement in accordance with the agreed methodology laid out in a Disbursement Link Indicators matrix and verification protocol (see Annex 1 and 2, drawn from the Program Appraisal Document (PAD)). Results will be verified through administrative records and documents, independent verification, site visits, and spot checks in randomly selected schools, and consultations with beneficiaries and partners to confirm the submitted data and confirm the accuracy of the results claimed. In accordance with good audit practice, verification will take place against a sampling framework if required by the DLR. The methodology is to be described in detail in the Request for Proposal.

III. SCOPE OF WORK (DECEMBER 2023- SEPTEMBER 2025)

3. The scope of work under this assignment will cover the verification of the below-listed DLRs. The IVA will prepare periodic and annual Results Verification Reports that will be simultaneously submitted to the Ministry of Education (MOE) through the Data Collection Unit (DCU) in order to guide the disbursement amount of the concessional loan to the Government of Jordan. The IVA will further be expected to join periodic meetings with the MOE. The Request for Proposal document will elaborate on the methodology of data collection and verification that the IVA shall use to verify the DLRs. In compliance with the verification protocols presented in the RFP, it is expected that the IVA would propose a detailed plan for verification, that will be agreed upon and finalized with the DCU, and will provide the needed specialized human resources that hold the required competencies and qualifications to verify the DLRs.

Table 1: DLRs to be verified by the Independent Verification Agency

DLR's Description
DLR 1.1-1.7 :Number of Syrian refugee boys and girls enrolled in target schools at the KG2, basic and secondary education levels
DLR 1.4 : Public KG teachers trained on implementing the current interactive KG curriculum as of the date of achievement, using MOE teaching and learning tools.
DLR 1.5 : Public KG classrooms equipped with teaching and learning tools based on the current interactive KG curriculum as of the date of achievement.
DLR 2.3b-2.4b : MOE develops and adopts an action plan for expanding public and private KG2 services.
DLR 2.4c : MOE issues a set of technical guidelines on the design of a PPP modality for expanding KG2 services.
DLR 2.5a-2.6a : Number of public KG2 classrooms refurbished and operational in alignment with current MOE standards as of date of achievement.
DLR 2.5b-2.6b : MOE establishes a template PPP agreement and signs the PPP agreement with at least one private sector provider in alignment with DLR1.2 to support the expansion of KG2 classrooms.
DLR 3.5a-3.7a : Number of private KGs that complete the evaluation process of the Quality Assurance System, as described in DLR#3.1.
DLR 3.5b-3.7b : Number of KG2 classrooms in public institutions that meet minimum quality standards established under the Quality Assurance System under DLR#3.1.
DLR 4.5a-4.7a :Number of newly appointed teachers evaluated against the NTPS (using the teacher evaluation framework) and meeting minimum standards in instructional practices

DLR 4.5b-4.7b: Number of K-12 teachers trained and certified in compliance with the National Teacher Professional Standards (NTPS)
DLR 4.5c-4.7c: Number of K-12 teachers meeting minimum standards in socioemotional practices as defined in the teacher evaluation framework
DLR 5.1: MOE develops an action plan for separating the secondary school graduation function of the Tawjihi exam from its function to determine admission to higher education
DLR 5.2: MOE adopts a regulation separating the secondary school graduation function of the Tawjihi exam from its function to determine admission to higher education, in alignment with DLR 7.6b
DLR 6.4a-6.6a: Number of schools equipped with upgraded WASH facilities
DLR 6.4b-6.6b: Number of schools rehabilitated to meet minimum health and safety requirements as defined in MOE specifications documents.
DLR 7.3a-7.4a : MOE develops a national student assessment framework that covers classroom assessments, national assessments, and international assessments.
DLR 8.3a-8.4a: MOE develops a strategy for integrating blended learning content into the Jordanian curriculum, in alignment with the curriculum mapping conducted in DLR#6.1.
DLR 8.4c-8.6c: MOE develops blended learning content for a pilot, in alignment with the curriculum mapping developed under DLR#6.1 and the strategy adopted under DLR# 6.2.
DLR 8.4d-8.6d: MOE pilots a teacher training program for blended learning in a sample of public schools, for at least sixty (60) teachers.
DLR 8.5a-8.6a: MOE conducts a pilot of a PPP modality to expand basic and secondary education <i>Renumbered as DLR 6.5</i>

The detailed scope of work and tasks include:

(1) Documents & Records Verification

The IVA will review the availability and completeness of required policy, research, and strategy documents for the delivery of DLRs, ensuring these outputs meet the standards required in the Program Operational Manual (POM) and the verification protocol from the PAD (see Annex 2), following the detailed methodology agreed upon in the Technical Proposal to be submitted by the IVA. The IVA will also verify whether the Ministry completed the necessary approval and adoption processes for these documents in each case. The following minimum steps of documentation verifications are required to be conducted:

- Develop four categories of DLRs: document DLR, content DLR, infrastructure DLRs, and enrolment DLRs. Under each category, specify the actions that will be required from IVA to ensure compliance with the verification protocols, as such:
- Document DLR: IVA will develop a report that reviews each element of the verification protocol, and provide evidence from the document that the element has been met in line with the intention of the DLR. The report should include examples (for each element) from the document against the protocols.
- Content DLR: For the development of content DLRs (KG2 TV content, socioemotional data reports, blended learning content), IVA will conduct a thorough review of the quality, methodology of production, coverage and suitability of technology of the content
- Infrastructure DLR: This will involve spot checks in which engineers will review (against the verification protocol) the design, quality, location, and coverage of infrastructure DLRs. Infrastructure DLRs will require a sampling of schools/locations.
- Enrolment DLRs: This will involve spot checks in which researchers will review (against the verification protocol) the design, quality, location, and coverage to establish a sampling of schools/locations.

(2) Physical verification

The IVA will conduct physical verification through spot checks in the targeted schools and interviews and focus groups discussion with relevant stakeholders. The sampling framework for physical verification will need to be agreed upon with the Data Collection Unit (DCU). For instance, sampling is to be shared and approved by DCU.

(3) Meetings

A minimum of 6 meetings per year with the MOE and its DCU (and any other related stakeholders) are to be organized. These meetings are to be held immediately after the submission of due reports and should be used to provide an update on the schedule of deliverables, the status of implementation, and other issues. Additional meetings can be scheduled whenever necessary.

IV. DELIVERABLES

4. Deliverables will be in the form of periodic reports. The reports should be submitted in English and Arabic to the MOE –DCU, both in soft and hard copy.

Deliverable	Deliverable description
Inception report	<p>(To be submitted within 30 days from signing the contract): The IVA will submit to the DCU an inception report within 30 days of contracting. The report will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (I) the status of baseline data for all DLIs; (II) a clear plan and methodology for data collection and school sampling for physical verifications; (III) the proposed format for formal DLI verification reports over the lifetime of the program; and (iv) an implementation plan for capacity development work, including an approach to working with other technical assistance teams.
Verification Tools	<p>The IVA will submit its proposed verification tools to the DCU, for onward presentation to the Steering Committee, and the DCU will seek approval before carrying out assessments</p>
Three Periodic Results Verification Report	<p>Verification reports should be submitted to the Ministry of Education (MOE) upon the verification of the indicator(s), i.e., as soon as a DLR is met. Once the verification report is final, it will be submitted formally to the relevant authorities\ departments. The verification report should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Executive summary of key findings, including the figures for the targets achieved for the DLIs;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Methodology used for verification and analysis of data collected; ○ Summary of statistics for verification at school level, including tables, figures and related written analysis; ○ Demonstration and assessment of the accuracy of the information reported by the schools, field directorates, managing directorates, Open EMIS etc., using appropriate statistical tests, in accordance with the Verification Protocol; ○ Detailed progress on above mentioned DLRs; ○ Annex materials including final data collection tools, completed and clean data in tab-delimited format.
<p>Final Report</p>	<p>At the end of the Program June 2025, IVA to submit the final report to the MOE represented by the DCU. This report should include a complete summative description of activities, and results achieved through the program, as well as lessons learned with clear recommendations.</p> <p>The final report should highlight the impact of the P4R on education status in Jordan, also how the P4R linked to the ESP- Education Strategic Plan.</p>

V. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

5. The contract period of this assignment will be two years, and will cover the be performed for two years, September 2023 to May 2025.

VI. TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

6. To perform the required verification tasks, the IVA must have a strong Regional, International reputation with a strong local presence. The IVA will need to demonstrate ability to review DLIs under all the Results Areas. More specifically, the IVA shall possess:
 - Solid experience in research, data collection, data analysis, quantitative and qualitative research, think tank and education, ICT, engineering and human resources, in the field of audit, project management, or any other relevant field. Assigning extra Level of Effort or consultancy is encouraged to ensure the required expertise is mobilized for conducting verification to technical components, following the required methodology and approach.
 - Extensive experience in conducting physical checks, surveys, interviews, FGD's
 - Very good Auditing and/or technical auditing expertise
 - Knowledge of local formalities and customs, including ability to obtain all necessary permissions and permits related to the logistics of survey implementation
 - Ability to clearly communicate, both oral and written, in English and Arabic
7. It is expected that the proposed methodology of implementation will include the key staff required to complete the assignments.

8. Team composition and qualification requirements for key experts

All proposed professional staff must work directly on the activity. The proposed staff for this activity must be:

The firm should put together a qualified evaluation team with a local presence and experience in Jordan. Overall, all team members should have:

1. Education: Relevant degrees in statistics, information management, economics, finance, and auditing.
2. Relevant work experience: Extensive experience in conducting similar types of assessments; previous working experience with the Government of Jordan is a plus.

3. Key competencies: High proficiency in English and Arabic.
4. Country experience: Familiarity with Jordan is essential.

Interested firms should propose a team composition that they consider adequate. However, at the minimum, the following requirements should be observed:

- Senior investigator: Full or part-time presence in the country. Proposals should include proposed time allocation in the country.
- Financial Auditor: Full-time presence in the country
- Statistician/ Information Management Officer: Presence in the country is not required, knowledge of Arabic is a must
- Field coordinator/ research assistant: Full-time presence in the country
- Surveyors: Members who have substantial experience conducting surveys and interviews in Jordan; fluency in Arabic is a must. The sample size will be around 3 to 5% of the beneficiaries from each program.

Senior investigator: Required skills and experience

- Master's degree in a relevant field, preferably economics.
- Minimum 15 years of directly relevant experience in high-scale auditing projects
- Relevant experience in producing quantitative data analysis reports
- Relevant experience in coordinating the implementation of fieldwork
- Excellent written English communication skills, with a focus on research protocols, research papers, and descriptive reports for a diverse audience
- Ability to facilitate communication between various levels of management and work independently to meet deadlines
- Previous work experience with the Government of Jordan is a plus

Senior Financial Auditor:

- Master's degree or an equivalent certificate in finance, accounting, or a relevant field
- Minimum of 10 years of directly relevant experience in high-scale projects auditing
- Proven work experience in a quantitatively heavy role
- Fluency in both Arabic and English is a must

Financial Auditor/s

- Bachelor's degree or an equivalent certificate in finance, accounting, or a relevant field
- Minimum of 5 years of directly relevant experience in projects auditing

Statistician/ Information Management Officer

- Master's degree in statistics, economics, or another relevant major
- A minimum of 7 years of relevant experience in analyzing quantitative data using statistical analysis software
- Knowledge of English and Arabic is a must
- Proven work experience in a quantitatively heavy role
- Excellent data visualization and presentation skills

Field coordinator: Required skills and experience

- A bachelor's degree as a minimum
- A minimum of three years experience in managing data collection projects, including procurement and fieldwork
- Ability to communicate in English and Arabic
- Familiarity with Social Protection projects is a plus
- Proven ability to facilitate communication between different levels of government and between government and development partners
- Excellent interpersonal and problem-solving skills

Survey team: Required skills and experience

- Two years' experience in data collection in Jordan.
- Familiarity with social protection projects is a plus
- Team familiar with interview techniques and fluent in Arabic
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and in using data collection tools

VII. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT

9. The DCU will provide IVA with the relevant records and documents necessary to carry-out verifications. Moreover, the DCU will facilitate access by IVA to reports, documents, other pertinent information, and relevant government staff.

VIII. INPUTS INTO THE ASSIGNMENT

- Project Appraisal Document (PAD)
- Loan Agreement
- Disbursement guidelines for WB Loans (Program-for-Results)
- Program Operational Manual (POM)
- Any other relevant program documents, studies, assessments, etc.

IX. REPORTING PROCEDURES

10. The IVA will report to the Ministry of Education's (MOE) DCU and work closely with the program Focal point at the DCU team. The main contact will be the executive director of the DCU or their representative

The payment schedule:

Description of Deliverable	Comments
<i>Payment(1)- Upon submission of the Inception report (to be submitted within 30 days from signing the contract) and Official MoE approval</i>	<i>10% of the total cost</i>
<i>Payment(2)- Upon submission of Verification Tools and Official MoE approval</i>	<i>30% of the total cost</i>
<i>Payment(3)- Upon submission of Three Periodic Results Verification Report and Official MoE approval</i>	<i>35% of the total cost</i>
<i>Payment(4)- Upon submission of Final Report and Official MoE approval</i>	<i>25% of the total cost</i>