

Model Scope of Work on Workforce Assessments

Global Workforce in Transition Project

I. Introduction

The Global Workforce in Transition (GWIT) project is a 5-year USAID multi-task order Indefinite Quantity (IQC) contracting mechanism that assists developing nations build demand-driven workforce development systems that are a bridge between education and the economy. Workforce development systems support economic growth, reduce poverty, and increase countries' competitiveness in the global marketplace by working:

- On the supply side of the labor market to improve individuals' capacities to find and hold jobs and increase their incomes, and to make the public and private education and training programs more relevant to the needs of workers and firms in the competitive global marketplace;
- On the demand side of the labor market to enhance firms', clusters'¹, industries' and/or communities' human resources capacity for economic growth and to expand opportunities for people's economic advancement; and
- In the labor market to create an efficient, transparent, and information rich environment that makes it easier for employers to find workers with needed skills and for workers to find a job, stay employed and advance economically.²

The purpose of this model Scope of Work (SOW) is to:

- Describe the results that can be expected from a workforce assessment;
- Acquaint USAID mission staff with the assessment methodology, including tasks, timeframes, staffing requirements and level of effort; and
- Explain how Missions can contract for a workforce assessment using the USAID Global Workforce in Transition (GWIT) contracting mechanism.

II. Results that can be expected from a Workforce Assessment:

A Workforce Assessment helps USAID Missions gain a better understanding of the:

- Specific workforce challenges posed by changes in the economic environment and

¹ The term "cluster" and the notion of "sector" both imply a web of related enterprises, encompassing input suppliers, skills providers, financial institutions, producers, marketing agents, processors, advertising firms, professional associations, distributors, government agencies, research institutions, consulting firms, public relations/marketing companies, wholesalers, retailers, and so forth, all working on a related set of products and services. The difference between "cluster" and "sector" is one of location (clusters are usually geographically proximate) as well as function. Businesses organized in clusters tend to exhibit collaborative behaviors within the commodity chain – resulting *inter alia* in lower input costs, better qualified and educated workers, and improved logistical efficiency (Fairbanks and Lindsay, 1997) – and vis-à-vis other stakeholders in the competitiveness diamond. Aring, Belghazi, Bouzri, Salinger. (2003) "Morocco Workforce Development Assessment."

² For more background on workforce development systems, see *Workforce Development in the Global Economy* <http://www.gwit.us/global.asp>

- demographics. These changes include liberalization of trade policies, privatization, a country or region's desire to shift production to higher value-added products and services, and economic reconstruction after the end of conflict;
- Strengths and constraints in how current public and private policies and practices, including a country's immigration policies, youth attitudes toward work, and the remittances families receive from outside the country affect employment in the formal and informal economy and the development of the country's workforce;
 - Political, social and policy context for addressing these challenges including the shared and divergent perceptions and attitudes of key stakeholders regarding problems and potential solutions;
 - Capacity of the country's or region's workforce development, education, and labor market systems (including public and private providers, NGO's and labor market intermediaries) and their potential for addressing emerging challenges;
 - Effectiveness of communication among key stakeholders in the workforce system (see below) and the system's ability to respond effectively to changes in the environment;
 - Potential for developing sustainable public-private partnerships to address priority needs; and
 - Results being achieved by current projects supported by USAID and other donors, and opportunities for strengthening and leveraging these investments.

A workforce assessment results in:

- Recommendations for USAID assistance strategies that will strengthen the workforce system so that it better serves the current and future economic and social needs of the country's workers, employers and communities in the global economy;
- Suggestions on how workforce development strategies can be integrated into the Mission's economic growth, education, civil society, poverty reduction and other assistance portfolios; and
- Identification of the key public and private sector stakeholders who should be included in the process of addressing identified needs.

III. Method for Carrying our Assessment: Flexible and Adaptable to Local Needs

A Workforce Assessment uses a quick and relatively inexpensive methodology that can help USAID Mission staff, policy-makers, educators, and industry stakeholders decide where best to intervene to improve employment and economic outcomes in their country.

The assessment is carried out by a small team of experts in the field of inquiry. At a minimum, a team would include a workforce development or labor market specialist and a competitiveness expert. Depending on the assessment's focus the team may also include an expert on one or more specific industries, HIV/AIDS, youth service etc.

A workforce assessment begins before departure for the country with the analysis of available data, review of relevant documents and previously conducted studies, and discussions with USAID and other donor representatives. The purpose of the desk research

stage is to gain insights into the economic and political framework within which workforce development activities are carried out in the country and to formulate questions and hypotheses that will be pursued during the field research. Typically, the sources reviewed include publications from various world donor organizations such as the World Bank, the UN, the Regional Development Banks, Bi-lateral aid organizations, USAID, the US State Department, global NGO's such as the Carter Institute, Oxfam, AED, EDC and universities and community colleges doing work in international development through USAID's ALO partnerships. Other important sources that may or may not be either available or reliable include country government sources and local NGO's. One of the most useful sources early on are conversations with selected individuals, especially former citizens, who understand the country and the problems associated with economic and workforce development.

The in-country part of the assessment begins with an initial set of meeting with USAID staff. The purpose of these meetings is to acquaint Mission staff with the assessment, review the expected outcomes of the study, introduce the GWIT team, obtain contacts and background materials, and an overview of the situation from the perspective of the local Mission experts. Based on these meetings, the GWIT team produces a revised interview protocol and finalizes the interview schedule.

The assessment is carried out through a series of focus groups, key informant interviews and observational visits. If desired, surveys can be conducted to gather additional information. In addition to gathering information, interviews and focus groups also are used to test various ideas and approaches that have surfaced in other interviews or the debriefing process. For example, interviewers may provide interviewees with examples of what might be done and solicit feedback from them on the feasibility, and desirability of these ideas.

The interviews and focus groups are conducted with key labor market stakeholders including:

- The private sector- employers, including SMEs and micro-entrepreneurs in the informal sector, employer and industry associations and union representatives;
- Policymakers at the national and local levels, including elected officials as appropriate and influential people outside of government;
- Education and training providers in the public, private and non-governmental sectors;
- NGO's and other labor market intermediaries such as public and private employment agencies; and
- Employed and unemployed youth and adults, and NGO's that represent various constituencies such as immigrants and the disabled.

The workforce assessment methodology can be adapted easily to Mission needs and priorities. For example:

- A Mission that has not yet invested in workforce development may want to get a general assessment of the effectiveness of current workforce development policies and practices in the public and private sectors. Such an assessment would look at

the capacity of employers, employer associations, unions, education and training providers, NGO's, and labor market intermediaries. It would assess the quality of linkages that exist among these groups and identify opportunities for strategic investment in building capacity and public-private partnerships.

- Another Mission that is investing in cluster-based development activities in fields such as tourism, information technology, and agribusiness may want the assessment to identify the specific workforce development challenges and priorities of these clusters, and assess the capacity of existing educational institutions to address these priorities. A workforce assessment in this context would identify potential public-private partnerships and recommend strategies for filling immediate skill gaps and longer term needs.
- Still other Missions may want to focus the assessment on key workforce impacts of trade liberalization, privatization initiatives, or the spread of HIV/AIDS. They may want to use the assessment process to identify short- and long-term strategies that are likely to reduce high levels of youth unemployment or successfully reintegrate conflict-affected populations into the productive economy.

Although workforce assessments are presented in a free-standing sample SOW, Missions may prefer to incorporate the tasks associated with such an assessment as a first activity in a longer-term SOW that includes strategic planning and the implementation of strategies that flow from the assessment.

IV. Sample Scope of Work

Tasks: The contractor will be responsible for completion of tasks in the following phases:

Phase 1: Desk Research. Upon signing of the task order, the GWIT team will work closely with USAID staff and other GWIT team members to identify relevant sources that provide background for the in-country assessment. During this period, the team members may conduct interviews with informed sources in this country. The team leader may also conduct an advance visit for purposes of consulting with the Mission on the parameters of the assessment, holding preliminary consultations, and identifying local researchers. Local researchers may carry out background studies, possibly conducting surveys or interviews with key constituencies.

The results of the desk research phase are:

1. A brief report including an analysis of the country's economic and policy situation, hypotheses about the current situation and potential workforce development strategies that will be field-tested and refined during the in-country assessment and , information on the relevant activities of other donors. The list of sources consulted will be shared with the Mission.
2. A preliminary list of people to be interviewed.
3. Draft interview protocol(s) that will be refined in-country after consultation with the Mission.

4. Informational materials on the assessment that will be used with people being interviewed.

Phase 2: In-Country Assessment. Prior to departure, the assessment team may, as requested, meet with USAID officials in Washington to brief them on the study and to gain their perspective on the situation in the country and the issues to be addressed. Once in-country, the assessment team will conduct an initial briefing with the Mission staff, including the director and heads of key strategic objective teams. The team will finalize arrangements for site visits and meetings and conduct focus groups, observational visits, and key informant interviews with representatives of the key stakeholder groups.

The purpose of these interviews is to gain a more in-depth understanding of: the national and/or regional economy and the labor market; the political, social and policy context for action; the strengths and weaknesses of the country's or region's education and training system; private sector perspectives on workforce development issues; the effectiveness of communication among stakeholder groups; and the relevant investments and initiatives of USAID and other donors.

A typical day's schedule during this phase will include between four and six meetings. At the end of each day team members will record the information gathered through their interviews and debrief on what they are learning so that new questions, hypotheses and strategies can be pursued. If a survey is included in the SOW, it may be conducted concurrently with the other field-based activities. Prior to departure from the country, the team will debrief USAID Mission staff and present preliminary conclusions.

Phase 3: Written Report (s). The team will prepare a draft report on the process (inventory of people met with, methodology used, questionnaires and other materials used), findings and recommendations for USAID action. The team will submit the draft report to the USAID Mission for comment and will prepare the final report based on these comments.

Phase 4: Follow-up Activities (Optional). These activities may include conducting debriefing and/or strategic planning sessions with stakeholder groups related to implementation of recommended strategies. In addition, GWIT can assist the Mission in implementing strategies recommended by the assessment team.

Time Required

Depending on the scope of the assessment, the rapid assessment can usually be done in a span of four to eight weeks, during which at least one to two weeks are spent in-country. The amount of community level field work desired will influence the time required. An additional one to two weeks are needed if the Mission wants the assessment team to develop Terms of Reference for follow-on activities. The assessment process can be broken down as follows:

Week One-Three: Desk review, briefings, team formation, refinement of interview protocol, identification of key players, arranging for logistical support, and setting up preliminary schedule in partnership with USAID Mission country, and scheduling

appointments for interviews. This usually takes two to three weeks. Additional time may be required if an advance trip is included.

Week Three-Five: Travel to country, meetings with Mission Director and assigned staff to review desk research and approach, conducting interviews, conducting daily debriefings with team members and conducting an exit briefing with the USAID Mission. This will take one to three weeks depending on the scope of the assessment.

Week Five-Eight: Preparation of Report and deliverables as identified in the Scope of Work. This usually takes two weeks after leaving the country.

Level of Effort and Composition of the Workforce Assessment Team

The level of effort required will vary substantially depending on the size of the team, the length of the engagement and the amount of logistical and interpreter support that must be provided by the contractor. The schedule presented above should provide a starting point for deciding on an appropriate level of effort.

The Education Development Center, GWIT prime contractor, will be responsible for assembling an assessment team that has the capacity to address the issues that are the focus of the assessment. Typically, an assessment team will include a workforce development specialist and a general competitiveness expert. One or more subject matter experts such as an industry specialist or an expert in SME development, HIV/AIDS and youth employment may be added depending on the focus of the assessment. One team member will serve as team leader responsible for production of deliverables and liaison with the Mission.

The team will require logistical support and appropriate individuals will be hired locally by the contractor and, as required, one or more interpreters who have not been provided by the Government. In addition, local researchers and drivers may also be required. Alternatively, the Mission may choose to provide logistics and interpreter support. The Mission also may want to assign one or two staff members to participate in the team to ensure that the assessment process supports organizational learning.

Roles and Responsibilities

GWIT Team

The GWIT team, in partnership with the Mission, will conduct background research, develop a list of people to be interviewed, facilitate and conduct interviews, focus groups and debriefings, develop the interview protocols, and as needed, identify and enroll local counterpart organizations such as businesses, NGO's and intermediaries. The team will also prepare the deliverables as specified in the Scope of Work.

Local Mission

The role of the Mission depends on the amount of direct involvement it wants to have in the assessment. Mission involvement can enhance the assessment by providing invaluable insights into the background and the roles of various individuals and groups in the country. Mission staff can provide support to the assessment by providing contacts, background

information, country trends that cannot be readily obtained by the team in the U.S., serving as references, and in reviewing/analyzing the information gathered in the assessment. Mission staff also can provide logistical support in the form of support staff to schedule appointments, print documents, etc. Mission staff can help identify interpreters and drivers (if needed) and ideally, participate in the assessment debriefing meetings.

Deliverables

Initial analysis of the country’s current situation. This analysis is based on desk research and any background studies conducted. It will be presented to the Mission prior to the beginning of the field work.

Workforce Assessment. The final report analyzes the workforce development situation in the country, describes the assessment process including the people interviewed, focus groups conducted and sites visited, and makes recommendations for USAID assistance to address identified needs. These recommendations are prioritized and supported with an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses and the time and budget that is likely to be required for implementing them.

Debriefing with Mission on Findings and Recommendations. This debriefing will provide an opportunity for the assessment team to respond to Mission questions and refine options, as requested.

Optional Deliverables that would increase the level of effort and time required to complete the engagement include:

Debriefing with Stakeholder Groups. This may entail strategic planning sessions related to implementation of recommended strategies.

Assistance to Support Implementation of Recommendations. This may include implementation of strategies recommended or the development of Terms of Reference or work plans leading up to strategy implementation. The following table illustrates the kinds of actions that could result from a rapid assessment process.

Table: Illustrative Examples of Follow-on Activities

Types of Follow-on Activities	Examples of How EDC Could Facilitate the Implementation of Follow-on Activities
1. Activities that enhance linkages between schools and training institutions and demand forces in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical assistance to support a national skills standard effort in targeted occupational clusters • Provide leadership training to strengthen the capacity of national WFD boards and associations • Organize observational visit to other countries by members of WFD board to benchmark best practices • Organize linkage programs between skills standards agencies in the U.S. and participating GWIT countries
2. Activities that improve education and training outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize curriculum development workshops for education and skills training providers • Identify relevant education and training materials from other countries • Organize distance learning on-line train-the-trainer courses for skills training providers • Conduct an assessment of workforce learning needs/styles

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a cost-effectiveness analysis of existing WFD education and training programs • Organize a capacity-building linkage program between host country training institutions and U.S. community colleges
3. Activities that improve the productivity of youth in the informal sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical assistance to support the efforts of community-based NGOs to build workforce development stakeholder associations to improve competitiveness of local industries that employ young people • Develop and/or adapt research instruments that assess the effectiveness of youth-focused micro-enterprise programs • Provide technical assistance and other resource support to distance learning efforts that provide workplace learning for marginalized youth • Organize linkage programs between youth-oriented workforce development programs in the U.S. and participating GWIT countries
4. Activities that strengthen the policy environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help create a governance structure and financing mechanism for workforce development • Provide technical assistance to help establish the legal framework for a national skills standards program • Support efforts of local research organizations to design and implement a study on skills training finance and cost recovery issues • Conduct R&D studies to assess different WFD training incentive options • Provide technical assistance to help establish a workforce development information system to inform policymakers • Organize a linkage program between WFD policymaking institutions in the U.S. and participating GWIT countries
5. Activities that strengthen cluster competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships with local training providers • Conduct a workforce diagnostic process • Benchmark international skill requirements of employers in cluster • Develop skill standards for entry and advancement in the cluster • Form public/private regional skill development centers

V. Accessing GWIT Services

Accessing GWIT services is easy.

- Draft your scope of work, ensuring that your objectives align with the general purposes of GWIT.
- Share the draft Scope of Work of the task order with your contracting officer (CO) and the GWIT technical officer (CTO) in EGAT/ED, Gwen El Sawi (gwelsawi@usaid.gov) or phone: 202-712-1849. The CTO must confirm to you and your CO that your objectives are consistent with those of GWIT.
- Discuss any adjustments with your CO that need to be negotiated with the GWIT contractor, EDC. Evelyn Ganzglass, Project Manager, eganzglass@edc.org or phone: 202-572-3735.
- Your CO issues a delivery order request to EDC.
- EDC responds with a task order proposal for your Scope of Work.
- Your CO negotiates the delivery order with EDC Contract Officer, Ken Repp, krepp@edc.org or phone: 617-618-2251. Copy of delivery order is forwarded to CTO.
- EDC fields the team and completes your work.

The Global Workforce in Transition (GWIT) initiative is a 5-year, multi-task order Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC) mechanism that enables Missions, Bureaus and other USAID operating units to access technical support when forging strategic plans or facilitating the development of sustainable, demand-driven workforce development systems. The prime contractor is Education Development Center, Inc. Partner organizations are Associates for International Resources and Development (AIRD), Booz Allen Hamilton, Development Informatics, Opportunities Industrialization Centers, International and Regional Technology Strategies Inc.

GWIT's user-friendly website www.gwit.us provides detailed information on how missions can access GWIT services, scopes of work, GWIT capabilities, and additional relevant resources and links.

