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Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
South Cooperation Department
Asia Division
Swiss Cooperation Office and Consular Agency in Mongolia

RESTRICTED INVITATION CALL

Mandate for the

Experience Capitalisation of SDC in the area of Basic Education and Vocational Training in Mongolia

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Place of Mission:** Mongolia
- Timeframe:** **Mid August 2022 – March 2023 (preferred timing)**, with another timing option possible to propose
- Number of working days:** maximum of 50-60 days (for the whole team, including preparation, report writing and production of capitalisation products)

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Abbreviations list

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFS	Agriculture and Food Security
Aimag	An administrative/decentralised subdivision (equivalent to a “province”)
BVET	Basic Education and Vocational Education
CAPEX	Capitalisation of Experiences
CHF	Swiss Franc
CS	Country Strategy
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CODEP	Coping with Desertification Project 2007 -2014 (funded by SDC)
COVID-19	Severe acute respiratory syndrome caused by <i>coronavirus 2</i>
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development project
EU	European Union
FDFA	[Swiss] Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
GFA	German Consulting Group, implementer of the VET/YEPP project
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GoM	Government of Mongolia
ILO	International Labour Organization
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
MNT	Mongolian Tugrug (CHF 1 = MNT 3'100 as of April 2022)
MTR	Mid-term Review
NSO	National Statistics Office
SCO	Swiss Cooperation Office
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UB	Ulaanbaatar
UN	United Nations
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VSD	Vocational Skills Development Project
YEPP	Youth Employment Promotion Project
YESD	Youth Employment Support Desk
YDP	Youth Development Project

1. Background

General: Mongolia is the least densely populated and the second largest landlocked (1.16 million square kilometres) country in the world. The total population of Mongolia in 2020 was 3.36 million and is projected to reach 4 million by 2034.

The largest segment of 31.9% belongs to the youngest cohort of 0-14 years and a large demographic group of 30.7% is aged between 15-34 years. With 62.6% (or 2,101,821) of the total population under 35 years, Mongolia has the potential to reap the economic benefits from its demographic dividend with the right policy for job creation coupled with human capital investments to meet the demands of the labour market.

In 2020, 69% of total population was living in urban areas and 31% was residing in rural areas. Out of 2.3 million people living in urban areas, 1.6 million reside in Ulaanbaatar, the nation's capital, and the rest reside in small urban centres. The urban population is projected to grow from the current levels to an estimated 3.1 million by 2050 (UNESCO, 2019).

Economic situation: The country has extensive deposits of copper, gold, coal, molybdenum, fluorspar, uranium, tin, and tungsten. Largely on the strength of its extractive resources, the Mongolian annual economic growth reached its peak in 2011 at 17.3%, making it the fastest growing economy in the world. Since 2011, growth has slowed significantly, measuring 1.2% in 2016 due to sharp declines in foreign direct investments and its dependence on China as its main export market.

COVID-19 has put the economy under deep pressure, despite resolute action taken by the Government of Mongolia to contain the virus. The GDP contracted by 5.3% in 2020, its worst contraction since the early 1990s (ADB, 2021). It is estimated to reach 2.1% in 2022 (World Bank, 2022). A sharp decline in global demand for key commodities and border closures with China were among the key external factors that affected the mining-led economy. The services sector was hit hard by containment measures. While a series of government relief and stimulus packages in the form of tax relief and income support helped mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on households and businesses, it made a significant pressure on the central budget. Consequently, government debt as a share of GDP has been increasing since 2020, reversing the downward trend of previous years.

Employment: The labour market in Mongolia differs significantly from other countries in the region or from those at a similar development level. Mongolia's labour force participation has declined gradually over the last two decades, modestly reflecting greater educational participation. In 2021, Mongolia's unemployment rate stands at 8.4%; it is 2.2% higher than the global average, and it never dropped below 7% during 2011-2021. Agriculture has remained the largest employer in the country since 2000, although its share is declining, against the rise of the construction and mining sector in Mongolia. Mismatch of labour market demand and supply is still the biggest challenge for the Mongolian labour market.

Education: Though Mongolia's education system seems to be at par with ones in the Asia and Pacific region, the education and training systems have not succeeded in adequately equipping students with skills that are in high demand (SICA, 2021). Mongolia is a country with a reverse gender gap with more girls in secondary education, more women pursuing higher education (60%) and also employed in education sector (68%). General education is considered the most important stage in the educational system. Mongolia's general education is free and mostly provided by public institutions: of the 820 schools across the country, 82% are public and 18% are private. 85 higher education institutions are operating with total 147'293 students. 75 formal education and training organisations have been providing vocational education and skills trainings in the TVET sector having over 40'000 students. Affiliated previously to the Ministry of Labour (since 2012), TVET sector has been restructured under Education Ministry from January 2022.

2. Evolution of Country Strategy/programmes for Mongolia

a) Country Strategy 2013-2017: VET domain

SDC has started its interventions in TVET and education in 2012 through projects such as the VET phase 1, and some components of the Coping with Desertification Project (CODEP). The Swiss Country Strategy (CS) for Mongolia for 2013-2017 addressed important development challenges and was well aligned with the government's development priorities for the period. The three domains were confirmed as relevant for Mongolia's development, specifically the domain of Vocational Education and Training

(VET) and Agriculture and Food Security (AFS) were assessed as more beneficial for the effectiveness of the Swiss programme based on the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of SC in 2015. The “Vocational Education and Training” domain goal was to improve employability of rural men and women through:

Outcome 1: TVET: Improved employability of VET trained young men and women.

Outcome 2: Rapid skills development and improved employability of men and women with lack of marketable skills.

The projects contributing to the domain were: **Scholarships project phase 2, VET phase 1, Vocational Skills Development (VSD) phase 1, Youth Development Project (YDP), and SME Development project** (was a continuation of Income and Employment domain for CS 2013-2017). (s. Annex 3). The modalities of implementation were various including contributions (Scholarships, VSD, YDP, SME development) and a mandate to GFA Consortium for implementing VET project.

The MTR of the CS, confirmed the SDC interventions as relevant for Mongolia’s development, although participants felt that better focusing within the domains (e.g. VET - employment and employability, and AFS - increased market orientation) would be beneficial for the effectiveness of the Swiss programme.

b) Country strategy 2018-2021: BVET domain

Based on the achieved results of the domain and contextual changes, the CS 2018-2021 considered that the VET domain was relevant, taking into account the relatively high unemployment rates. However, the VET became a sector where relatively many donors were engaged, including influential partners like the World Bank, ADB, the European Union and BMZ, and thus SDC’s space to make a difference in the VET sector had shrunk. Considering this and bearing in mind a reduced cooperation budget, it was decided that the VET domain will be phased out over the period 2018-2021.

Based on this decision and in line with the new Dispatch on Switzerland’s International Cooperation 2017–2021, the domains of CS were redefined: AFS, Basic Education and Vocational Education Training (BVET) and Governance.

The BVET domain goal was to contribute to systemic changes in education and labour markets for increased employment of women and men. The expected outcomes were:

Outcome 1: A functioning institutional framework that promotes quality education and better employment is in place;

Outcome 2: Youth and adults obtain and apply skills for better employment; and

Outcome 3: The private sector is contributing to a market-oriented VET system.

The impact hypothesis was that if women and men have access to high-quality, demand-driven education and better-performing employment services, they will have more opportunities to find employment and thus improve their livelihood. SDC continued to support Mongolia in implementing reforms in education (including the application of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) concepts) and employment systems to strengthen the match between demand (labour market needs) and supply (skilled graduates). Upgrading training programs and the capacity building of teachers/trainers in secondary and TVET schools and civil servants in employment services should have been allowing students to obtain the necessary skills for employability, including professional and soft skills. The integration of the private sector into all levels and processes of vocational education remained a priority.

In order to enhance sustainability, SDC aimed for greater ownership of the government through enhanced co-implementation and co-financing in the sector.

The projects contributing to the domain were: **ESD project phase 1, Scholarships project, VSD project phase 2 (until February 2019), YDP (completed in 2018), VET project phase 2 which was renamed to Youth Employment Promotion Project (YEPP)** (s. Annex 3). The modalities of implementation remained diverse: contributions (Scholarships, VSD, YDP) and a mandate to GFA Consortium for implementing YEPP.

c) Swiss phasing out programme for 2022-2024

Switzerland’s International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024 places greater emphasis on countries in fragile contexts and focus on fewer priority countries. As a result, Switzerland has decided to phase out its bilateral development cooperation in several countries by the end of 2024, including Mongolia. In the remaining three years, SDC continues to actively engage in areas where it provides long-term expertise, experience, and added value. Thus, in 2022-2024, the Swiss development assistance to Mongolia

amounts to CHF 8.2 million in support of programmes related to governance, climate change and the environment, and inclusive economic development. Working with the Mongolian government and other partners, including donors, Switzerland ensures a responsible phasing out and invests in sustaining jointly obtained results. Different forms of collaboration, other than bilateral cooperation, such as humanitarian assistance in emergency situations, remain possible beyond 2024.

The overall goal of the phasing out of the 2022-2024 Cooperation Programme is *to contribute to an equitable, inclusive, environmentally friendly, and prosperous society through the accountability of state institutions at all levels and the empowerment of Mongolian citizens*. SDC will contribute to this goal through interventions in three complementary portfolios: 1) democracy, respect for human rights, and promotion of gender equality; 2) climate change adaptation and mitigation, and environmental sustainability; 3) inclusive economic development for the sustainable livelihood of women and men of the low-income population.

The three portfolio outcomes target results at the policy and regulatory level, as well as at the level of service delivery for poor and vulnerable people. Knowledge management is to be ensured by the dissemination of results and experiences, mainly through capitalisations, evaluations, and specific public communication means, as well as by takeovers by the state institutions and/or other stakeholders of the development community.

The ongoing projects are contributing to two different portfolios: **ESD project phase 2** is under the portfolio 2: “Climate Change Adaptation/Mitigation and Environmental Sustainability”; and **Scholarships project and YEPP** are under the portfolio 3 “Inclusive economic development for the sustainable livelihood of female and male herders and farmers”.

3. Objectives of the Experience Capitalisation

The overall objective of the Experience Capitalisation exercise (CAPEX) is to capitalize on the most significant results, lessons learned, challenges encountered and best practices achieved in Mongolia with SDC support during 2013-2022 in the domain, specifically in the areas of basic education, vocational training, youth development and employment support. The exercise should highlight challenges and best practices which are also relevant beyond Mongolia to a possible extend.

The capitalisation process itself consists of two interrelated parts that are to be reflected in the final outcome:

Part 1) Meta-analysis: Validating the available products and reported results in terms of their significance, sustainability, uptake, replicability and relevance (use the example in Annex 1 “Description of the outcomes”), the consultants should conduct a Meta-analysis of the historic results achieved over the years. It should capture the contribution of the projects to the goals specified in the consecutive country strategies for Mongolia until today. It should also provide a documentation of development approaches, aid modalities and methodologies across the mentioned sectors. The outlining of lessons learned will be required where appropriate with a relevance for the government partners, other national and/or international partners. Given that most of the projects in the domain were completed and there are only few implementation partners available now in Mongolia, this part is expected to be summarising and descriptive. Where necessary and possible, the Meta-analysis should be complemented with available key informant interviews (suggestions will be provided by SDC). The Meta-analysis should confirm the choice of sectoral / thematic topics to be developed further during the Part 2. The topics should be chosen based on the most relevant results, challenges and lessons learned for SDC in Mongolia and beyond, the Mongolian government and the partners engaged in similar sectors of development cooperation. The final analysis report should suggest a format and design of three thematic deep-dives with accompanying 3-4 new capitalisation products, to be developed by a local expert and/or media agency later during the Part 2.

Part 2) Development of three thematic deep-dives: it should capture SDC results in the identified and selected sectors/themes, considering the experiences and achievements over the years. It should focus on identifying sectoral and institutional lessons, that can guide national and international partners, who may potentially take-over some of the SDC generated results and approaches, and on the lessons that remain relevant for SDC development cooperation in the sectors/themes worldwide. Additional interviews can/should be conducted during the in-country mission. The thematic deep-dives will have a form of reports with accompanying audio & visual capitalisation products for dissemination, out of which 3-4 should be new (see the Annex 2 “Main working principles for videos” as a guidance). A dissemination strategy and approach should be outlined in the thematic deep-dives.

4. Profiles of the Experts

Consultants:	Roles:	Required qualifications:
Team Leader International consultant	Responsible for the overall mandate's planning and execution and the deliverables; Review the documents; Manage the processes; Report to SDC; The main counterpart for communicating with SDC	Master degree in social sciences/education/anthropology/TVET, employment; Thematic knowledge in education, vocational skills development, employment, economics; Proven experience of minimum 10 years in leading or conducting capitalisation processes with concrete results/products; Strong leadership and management skills of over 5 years in leading multidisciplinary teams; Excellent English speaking and writing
Team member, expert (local/international)	Support the team leader in drafting and finalisation of the expected reports and products, Organise and coordinate the meetings, field mission; Be responsible for the assigned parts: e.g. designing the capitalisation products	Academic degree in social sciences/TVET/Employment; Knowledge and experiences in media and communication works; Proven experiences in capitalisation exercises, developing communication content and products for various audiences; Excellent English skills, speaking and writing
Local expert and/or Media agency	Design and Production of audio & visual capitalization products	Proven experiences in developing communication content and products for various audiences; Working connections to/relations with local media outlets; Experiences in working with the international organisations; Good English skills, speaking and writing

5. Deliverables

- A. Meta-analysis report;
- B. Thematic deep-dives reports, with 3-4 new audio & visual products;
- C. Final financial report

6. Duration and Resources

The mandate (including preparation and report writing) will last a maximum of 50 days for the whole team, including preparation, report writing and production of capitalisation products. The offer must contain a detailed mission's planning with a clear work and days repartition between the team members, taking the **following agenda into consideration (preferred timing)**. **The consultants can suggest another timing option.**

No.	Milestones	Deadline	Responsible
1.	Call for proposals	25.05.2022	SDC
2.	Offer submission	22.06.2022	Consultants
3.	Provisory adjudication	27.06.2022	SDC
4.	Revised offer	03.07.2022	Consultants
5.	Final adjudication and Contract signature (preparation)	14.08.2022	SDC & Consultants
6.	Briefing in Mongolia with SDC (online)	By 26.08.2022	SDC
7.	Delivery of meta-analysis report (part 1)	By 25.10.2022	Consultants
8.	Debriefing with SDC on meta-analysis and decision on specific capitalization products	02.11.2022	Consultants & SDC
9.	Submission of draft 3 thematic deep-dives with 3-4 new specific capitalization products	By 31.01.2023	Consultants
10.	Debriefing with SDC	By 15.02.2023	Consultants & SDC
11.	Submission of final 3 thematic deep-dives with 3-4 new specific capitalization products + submission of financial report	By 15.03.2023	Consultants

7. Offers

Based on these Terms of References, an offer is expected **by the 22th June 2022**. Only offers composed of a full team with the required profiles will be considered.

The offer must comprise:

1) a **narrative offer** of maximum 10 pages (without annexes) including:

- Understanding of the mandate;
- Methodological approach;
- Detailed schedule (chronogram);
- Consultants' profiles (with Curriculum Vitae in annexes) and their availability during the period;
- List of similar missions conducted (highlighted in colour in the CVs), with references in annexes.

2) a **financial offer**, comprising of:

- Submission letter with date and signature, showing the offer's total amount;

- Duly filled SDC budget form. In addition to the consultants' fees and per diem, the offer must contain all the necessary costs for conducting the mission under the team leader's responsibility. The financial offer should propose two scenarios, considering potential implications on international travels and/or in-country mission.

The funding of this mandate as well as the administrative-financial follow-up is of the exclusive responsibility of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Mongolia. The consultants are accountable only to SDC Mongolia.

Offers are to be sent per E-mail to:

Mrs. Zayasaikhan Dugeree

Senior National Programme Officer

E-mail: zayasaikhan.dugeree@eda.admin.ch

Direct phone: +41 58 480 26 33

Standard phone: +976 11 331422

With copy to:

Mr. Benoît MEYER-BISCH

Deputy Director of Cooperation

E-mail: benoit.meyer-bisch@eda.admin.ch

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8. Reference documents

[Swiss Country Strategy for Mongolia 2013-2017,](#)

[Swiss Country Strategy for Mongolia 2018-2021,](#)

[Swiss Phasing-out Programme for Mongolia 2022-2024](#)

Annex 1. Description of the outcomes as an example

Annex 2. Main working principles for videos

Annex 3. Table of the projects under the domains

Annexes:

Annex 1. Description of the outcomes (example)

Title of the outcome:	
Problem/issue at the stake	
Description of experience	
Results	
Sustainability	
Replicability	
Strengths and Opportunities	
Weaknesses and Threads	
Relevance (for SDC, international, national government, partner etc)	

Annex 2. Main working principles for videos

- a)** The videos should start with introductory words and interview of the respective authorities. It has to show also SDC's, and beneficiaries representatives, private sector representatives (if relevant).
- b)** The final brief and storyboard will be fully discussed and agreed with SDC and consultants before the media team work.
- c)** Organize intensive dialogue and feedback with the partners to define the main messages they want to bring across as a basis for the products.
- d)** Understand the audience and their natural tendencies, motivations, goals, challenges, and opportunities. Each capitalization product has a specific target audience. The words and messages used for the capitalization products must correspond to such audiences. They must be usable both in Mongolia as well as abroad (mainly in Switzerland and Germany).
- e)** Simple, concise messages that can be delivered quickly and powerfully usually have the highest impact, especially on the target audience. Distilling complex topics into more digestible is crucial.
- f)** Cut out the technical jargon and business speak, reduce complexity and cut right to the case by saying exactly what is important in as few words as possible. Also consider using graphics, stories and analogies in a memorable way.
- g)** Use powerful visualization. Any product vision needs to be something that can be explained in pictures, not just concepts. The best visual assets are generally a single image with a powerful and clear message.
- h)** All corporate design and communication rules (use of logo, etc.) must be respected. They will be provided separately by SDC and Communication Officer.

Example of capitalization products from other SDC projects:

- Documentary videos
- Infographic brochures
- Full capitalisation brochure (PIE)
- Newspaper articles
- Newsletters with infographics/ factsheets

Annex 3. Table of projects under the domain

Projects	Duration	partner	2013-2021 (CHF)	2022-2024 (CHF)
Scholarships	2012-2023	Zorig Foundation	440,798	67,500
VET/YEPP	2012-2021	GFA Group	8,059,784	
SME Development	2013-2017	BPN Foundation	1,035,205	
YDP	2013-2018	UNEPA	4,778,387	
VSD	2013-2019	GIZ	9,834,692	
ESD phase 1	2013-2018	GIZ, Uppsala, Ministry of	8,187,012	
ESD phase 2	2019-2023	Education and ITCNE	1,731,100	1,265,000
Totals			34,066,978	1,332,500