



National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya

Integrated Mechanisms for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Education (IMPRESSED) Project

Project ID No.: P-KE-IA0-005
ADF Loan No: 2100150043643

Terms of Reference

For the Provision of

**CONSULTANCY FIRM SERVICES FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND
EMPLOYMENT IN 12 ASAL COUNTIES IN KENYA**

OCTOBER 2026

A. BACKGROUND

The Government of the Republic of Kenya has received financing from the African Development Fund, through the African Development Bank Group, to implement the Integrated Mechanisms for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Education (IMPRESSED) Project. The Project is implemented by the Ministry of Education through the National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya (NACONEK), the Executing Agency.

The Project Development Objective is to increase access to quality and inclusive education for out-of-school children aged 6–17 years and improve skills development, employability and livelihood outcomes for out-of-school youth (OOSY) aged 18–35 years in Kenya’s arid and semi-arid lands. The Project targets Mandera, Garissa, Wajir, Marsabit, Tana River, Kilifi, Samburu, West Pokot, Turkana, Makueni, Kajiado and Homa Bay counties.

Young people in ASAL and marginalized communities face limited access to market-relevant training, certification, apprenticeship, entrepreneurship support, digital opportunities and reliable pathways into employment. These constraints are compounded by poverty, remoteness, fragile labour markets, gender inequality, climate vulnerability and weak linkages between training institutions and employers. The Project will address these barriers through recognition of prior learning (RPL), demand-driven Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET), job-readiness support, apprenticeships, entrepreneurship, start-up support and digital innovation and climate-resilience intervention hubs.

The Skills Development and Employment Consultancy will support NACONEK to plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and report Component 2 interventions. The Firm will provide an integrated delivery mechanism linking OOSY, accredited training and RPL institutions, employers, county governments, private-sector partners, financial and incubation services, and the IMPRESSED Project Coordination Unit.

B. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The overall objective is to increase the transition, completion, certification, employment and self-employment outcomes of OOSY by establishing inclusive, demand-driven and accountable skills-to-work pathways in the target counties.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Train and support 2,000 youth in entrepreneurship, with specific attention to green and adaptive entrepreneurship.
2. Provide twenty-two (22) months of professional consulting support for planning, coordination, implementation, quality assurance, monitoring and reporting of skills development and employment interventions for OOSY.
3. Undertake one comprehensive job-readiness, skills-needs and county-level labour-market analysis covering the target counties and translate findings into practical training, entrepreneurship and placement pathways.
4. Develop and operationalize one job-matching e-platform and organize job fairs to improve connections between trained OOSY, employers, apprenticeships and self-employment opportunities.
5. Conduct two tracer studies to establish employment, self-employment, earnings, enterprise activity, training relevance and beneficiary outcomes.
6. Enrol 3,000 OOSY in RPL assessment and/or short CBET courses under school-fee sponsorships paid directly to the institutions by NACONEK (from ADF funds) or by the ADF, place 3,000 OOSY in mentorship, internship and attachment opportunities, and facilitate linkages among OOSY, RPL/CBET institutions, employers, apprenticeship opportunities, incubation services, markets and financing partners.
7. Mainstream gender equality, disability inclusion, safeguarding, occupational safety, data protection, environmental responsibility and climate adaptation across implementation.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The scope of services shall comprise the following nine integrated areas:

1. Inception, Coordination and Implementation Planning

The Consultant shall review the Financing Agreement, Project Appraisal Report, implementation and procurement plans, results framework and relevant policies to confirm the project targets, geographic coverage, stakeholder roles and implementation arrangements. The Consultant shall prepare an inception report, implementation roadmap, staffing and county deployment plan, risk register, quality-assurance plan, safeguards approach and reporting framework. The Consultant shall also establish effective coordination arrangements among NACONEK, county counterparts, training providers and employers.

2. Job-Readiness, Skills Needs and Labour-Market Analysis

The Consultant shall undertake a county-level assessment of priority sectors, occupations, skills gaps, employer requirements, entry requirements, employment and self-employment opportunities and barriers affecting OOSY. The assessment shall identify job-readiness gaps and appropriate skills, entrepreneurship and employment pathways. The Consultant shall map employers, industry associations, TVET/CBET and RPL providers, apprenticeship opportunities and emerging green and climate-adaptive livelihood opportunities. The findings shall be consolidated into a labour-market assessment and county skills-pathway matrix to guide training, entrepreneurship, employer engagement and job-matching activities.

3. Entrepreneurship Training for 2,000 Youth

The Consultant shall develop or adapt an entrepreneurship training programme for 2,000 youth based on the approved labour-market and skills-needs assessment. The training shall cover opportunity identification, business development, financial literacy, costing and pricing, record keeping, market access, digital business practices and basic risk management. It shall also incorporate green and climate-responsive entrepreneurship relevant to ASAL conditions. The Consultant shall facilitate practical exercises, business-plan development, mentorship and linkages to incubation, markets and financing opportunities. Participation, assessment and completion shall be documented and reported to NACONEK.

4. Skills Development and Employment Support for OOSY

The Consultant shall mobilize, verify, register and support eligible OOSY through transparent and inclusive procedures and maintain an auditable beneficiary database. The Consultant shall identify, verify and enrol 3,000 OOSY for RPL assessment and certification and demand-driven short CBET courses through accredited institutions. The Consultant shall verify enrolment and attendance to support payment to the institutions by NACONEK or the ADF. The Consultant shall also arrange and document mentorship, internship, attachment and apprenticeship opportunities for 3,000 OOSY and coordinate employer engagement, workplace exposure, career guidance and placement activities. Beneficiaries shall be matched to appropriate training, employment and entrepreneurship pathways based on the approved labour-market assessment. The Consultant shall support linkages to incubation, markets, financing and relevant digital innovation and climate-resilience hubs. The Consultant shall provide routine technical, results, safeguards, risk and coordination reports and maintain the Component activity tracker. The Consultant shall not receive or disburse sponsorship, stipend or placement funds.

5. Job-Matching E-Platform and Job Fairs

The Consultant shall design, develop, test and operationalize a job-matching e-platform covering OOSY profiles, skills, qualifications, vacancies, apprenticeships, employer profiles and placement status, subject to NACONEK's approved ICT and data-governance arrangements. The Consultant shall undertake requirements validation, user

acceptance testing, data verification and operational readiness and shall hand over the platform, data and documentation to NACONEK. The Consultant shall support registration of employers, training providers and eligible youth and establish procedures for vacancy verification, candidate matching, referrals and placement tracking. The Consultant shall also design and support job fairs and document interviews, referrals and employment outcomes.

6. Tracer Studies

The Consultant shall conduct two tracer studies covering beneficiaries supported under the Skills Development Component. The studies shall assess employment, self-employment, enterprise activity, training relevance, certification, apprenticeship and placement experiences and beneficiary satisfaction. The Consultant shall use verified beneficiary records and appropriate sampling or census methods agreed with NACONEK. The Consultant shall compare the findings from the two study rounds, identify implementation lessons and areas requiring corrective action, and prepare two tracer-study reports containing the methodology, datasets, findings, limitations and recommendations.

7. Employer, Training-Provider and Partnership Coordination

The Consultant shall maintain an updated stakeholder register covering employers, training institutions, RPL centres, CBET providers, county governments, business-development organizations and relevant public agencies. The Consultant shall facilitate partnerships and referral arrangements for training, apprenticeships, employment, mentorship, entrepreneurship and market access. Employer engagement and placement arrangements shall be co-ordinated with the job-matching platform and job fairs.

8. Monitoring, Reporting, Safeguards and Quality Assurance

The Consultant shall maintain an M&E framework and indicator tracker aligned with the IMPRESED results framework and approved outputs. The Consultant shall monitor training participation and completion, RPL/CBET progression, employer engagement, apprenticeships, placements, entrepreneurship activities, platform use and tracer-study results. The Consultant shall maintain secure and auditable records and comply with applicable data-protection requirements. Gender, disability inclusion, safeguarding, GBV/SEA prevention, grievance management, occupational safety and child-protection requirements shall be integrated throughout implementation. Material implementation, safeguarding, fiduciary and data-quality risks shall be reported promptly to NACONEK.

9. Knowledge Transfer and Sustainability

The Consultant shall transfer relevant tools, templates, procedures and lessons learned to NACONEK and relevant county counterparts. The Consultant shall support sustainability of employer partnerships, training-provider linkages, job-matching processes and entrepreneurship support. At the end of the assignment, the Consultant shall prepare a consolidated handover package containing approved reports, databases, tools, stakeholder registers, training records and lessons learned.

D. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

All deliverables shall be submitted in editable electronic format and as signed final versions. Acceptance shall be based on completeness, accuracy, evidence of implementation, data quality, compliance with the approved work plan and written approval by NACONEK.

No.	Deliverable	Minimum Content / Acceptance Evidence	Indicative Timeline
1.	Inception Report and Integrated Implementation	Methodology, work plan, staffing and county deployment, stakeholder map, risk register, safeguards plan, M&E	Within 2 weeks

No.	Deliverable	Minimum Content / Acceptance Evidence	Indicative Timeline
	Framework	framework.	
2.	Job-Readiness, Skills-Needs and County Labour-Market Analysis	One consolidated assessment report, county profiles, priority sectors/occupations, employer requirements, job-readiness findings, skills gaps, green/adaptive opportunities and validated skills-pathway matrix.	As scheduled in approved work plan
3.	Entrepreneurship Training Package and Completion Report	Training framework for 2,000 youth; curriculum/materials; cohort and attendance records; green/adaptive entrepreneurship content; assessment/completion evidence; mentorship/referral records; training report.	Phased during implementation
4.	Skills Development and Employment Implementation Reports	Beneficiary mobilization and verification, verified RPL/CBET enrolment and attendance records supporting direct fee payments (3,000 OOSY) and pathway coordination/budget, mentorship, internship and attachment placements for 3,000 OOSY with verified attendance records for payment of stipends/host fees, employer/apprenticeship/placement activities, entrepreneurship linkages, safeguards, risks and progress against targets.	Monthly/quarterly over 22 months
5.	Job-Matching E-Platform and Job-Fair Output Package	Functional requirements, user/beneficiary data structure, testing/acceptance records, employer onboarding, platform operational-readiness report, job-fair reports and placement/referral records.	As per approved platform work plan
6.	Tracer Study Report I	Study methodology, beneficiary sample/database, employment and self-employment outcomes, training relevance, enterprise activity, satisfaction findings, cleaned dataset and recommendations.	Timing agreed in inception report
7.	Tracer Study Report II	Second tracer round, comparative findings, outcome verification, lessons learned, recommendations and cleaned dataset.	Timing agreed in inception report
8.	Final Skills Development and Employment Completion & Sustainability Report	Consolidated results, beneficiary and partner records, employment/entrepreneurship outcomes, platform and job-fair performance, lessons, sustainability arrangements and complete handover package.	By end of Month 22

E. METHODOLOGY AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Firm shall propose a practical, results-oriented methodology consistent with the assignment. At minimum, the approach shall:

- Use participatory and evidence-based planning, with meaningful engagement of OOSY, women, persons with disabilities, employers, counties, training institutions and community structures.

- Apply transparent, documented and auditable beneficiary-selection, sponsorship-verification and placement procedures.
- Use secure digital data systems with role-based access, data-quality checks, backup, confidentiality and compliance with applicable data-protection requirements.
- Link training choices to verified labour-market demand and define measurable completion, certification, employment, self-employment, earnings and enterprise outcomes.
- Maintain county-level implementation presence and escalation mechanisms for delays, dropout, safeguarding incidents, partner underperformance and fiduciary risks.
- Provide regular management dashboards, georeferenced or otherwise verifiable field evidence, beneficiary feedback and corrective-action tracking.
- Ensure knowledge transfer to NACONEK and county counterparts through tools, manuals, coaching and joint implementation.

F. REPORTING AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

NACONEK shall remain the Executing Agency and shall provide strategic oversight, contract management, fiduciary supervision and coordination with the Government of Kenya and the African Development Fund. The Consulting Firm shall report to the IMPRESED Project Coordination Lead and collaborate with NACONEK technical, procurement, finance, safeguards, monitoring and communication teams, county governments, training institutions, employers and other Project consultants.

Frequency	Report / Deliverable	Submission Deadline
Monthly	Progress report; financial-utilization report; risk and safeguards update	By the 5th day of the following month
Quarterly	Technical progress report; results-framework report; employment and entrepreneurship tracking report	Within 15 days after quarter-end
Annual	Lessons learned report; performance review report	On the contract anniversary
End of Assignment	Final completion report; sustainability and exit strategy	Not later than 30 days before contract end, except final approved report

NACONEK will review submitted deliverables and communicate acceptance or consolidated comments within the period stated in the contract. The Firm shall address comments and resubmit within the agreed period without additional cost where the revision relates to the approved scope.

G. DURATION AND WORK LOCATION

The assignment shall be implemented over twenty-two (22) months, subject to availability of funds and the terms of the contract. The Firm shall prepare a detailed activity and staffing schedule that sequences parallel activities and identifies critical milestones, dependencies and review periods.

The Firm may maintain its central coordination office in Nairobi but shall provide adequate and continuous field presence in the twelve target counties. Travel, accommodation, equipment, communications, insurance and other resources required to deliver the assignment shall be the responsibility of the Firm unless expressly provided by NACONEK in the contract.

H. CLIENT FACILITATION AND CONSULTANT RESPONSIBILITIES

NACONEK shall provide available Project documents and data, introductory letters, access to relevant counterpart staff and reasonable coordination support. NACONEK shall facilitate review and acceptance of deliverables and processing of approved payments in accordance with the contract.

The Firm shall provide all professional staff, county coordination, office systems, field logistics, data tools, insurance and operational resources necessary for timely delivery. It shall remain responsible for the quality, integrity, security and completeness of its work and for the performance of all personnel and sub-consultants.

I. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CONSULTING FIRM

The Consulting Firm shall demonstrate the following minimum qualifications and capacity:

1. Legal establishment and current statutory and tax compliance documentation.
2. At least five (5) years of relevant corporate experience in youth skills development, employment, TVET, RPL, CBET, entrepreneurship, apprenticeship, labour-market development or related programmes.
3. Demonstrated experience in Government or donor-funded programmes involving OOSY, youth, ASAL, remote, pastoralist or marginalized communities.
4. Demonstrated capacity in multi-county implementation, employer engagement, training-provider coordination, entrepreneurship support, placement and results monitoring.
5. Experience in digital beneficiary or employment systems, job-matching platforms, tracer studies or comparable data-driven employment interventions is desirable and shall be evidenced where claimed.
6. Adequate financial, institutional, monitoring, safeguarding, data-protection, fiduciary and quality-assurance capacity.
7. Availability of suitably qualified multidisciplinary personnel capable of supporting implementation in the twelve target counties.
8. Compliance with African Development Bank eligibility, integrity, anti-corruption and conflict-of-interest requirements.

Firms may associate through a joint venture or sub-consultancy arrangement to strengthen their qualifications. The proposal shall identify the lead firm, participating entities, responsibilities, level of effort and authorized representative. Changes to an approved association shall require prior written approval.

J. KEY PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

The Firm shall propose, at minimum, the following key experts. Qualifications shall be supported by signed CVs, certified academic and professional certificates where applicable, and evidence of relevant assignments.

No.	Position	Minimum Qualification and Experience	Core Responsibility
1	Team Leader / Skills Development Project Manager	Master's degree in Education, TVET, Development Studies, Economics, Project Management, Business or related field; at least 10 years' relevant experience in skills/employment or youth programmes.	Overall leadership, coordination of budget lines, client liaison, quality assurance, risk management and final accountability.
2	TVET / RPL / CBET Specialist	Degree in Education, TVET, Training, Curriculum or related field; at least 7 years' experience in RPL, CBET, training-provider management, assessment and certification.	Skills pathways, provider coordination, RPL/CBET linkages, learner progression and quality monitoring.
3	Entrepreneurship and Green/Adaptive Enterprise Specialist	Degree in Business, Entrepreneurship, Economics, Agribusiness, Development Studies or related field; at least 7 years' experience in entrepreneurship training, enterprise development or incubation.	Entrepreneurship curriculum, training of 2,000 youth, green/adaptive entrepreneurship, mentorship and enterprise linkages.
4	Labour-Market, Employer and Placement Specialist	Degree in Economics, Labour Studies, HR, Development Studies, Business, Education or related field; at least 7 years' experience in labour-market analysis, employer engagement, job-readiness, apprenticeship and placement.	Use of market-analysis findings, employer mobilisation, job fairs, apprenticeship and placement systems.
5	M&E / MIS / Data and Tracer Study Specialist	Degree in Statistics, Economics, M&E, Information Systems or related field; at least 7 years' experience in beneficiary systems, surveys, tracer studies and multi-county M&E.	Data systems, tracer studies, dashboards, data quality, outcome verification and reporting.
6	Digital Job-Matching / ICT Specialist	Degree in ICT, Computer Science, Information Systems or related field; at least 5 years' experience in digital platforms, databases or employment information systems.	Functional requirements, platform coordination, testing, data structures, employer/user onboarding and platform reporting.

No.	Position	Minimum Qualification and Experience	Core Responsibility
7	Gender, Safeguarding and Social Inclusion Specialist	Degree in Social Sciences, Gender, Community Development or related field; at least 5 years' experience in inclusion, safeguarding, grievance management and vulnerable-youth programming.	Gender and disability inclusion, safeguarding, GBV/SEA prevention, grievance and OHS requirements.

K. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Technical proposals shall be evaluated out of 100 marks. A proposal must obtain a minimum technical score of 75 marks to proceed to financial evaluation. Failure to meet a stated minimum qualification for the Team Leader or to submit the required signed CVs and supporting evidence may render the proposal non-responsive, subject to the solicitation document.

No.	Criterion	Scoring Basis	Maximum Marks
1	Relevant experience of the Firm	General experience in skills, TVET, RPL, CBET, employment or enterprise programmes (5 mks); at least three similar completed assignments (9 mks); multi-county ASAL or fragile-context experience (3 mks); employer, training-provider and private-sector partnership experience (3 mks).	20
2	Understanding, methodology and work plan	Understanding of the assignment and comments on the ToR (5 mks); responsiveness and practicality of methodology (10 mks); sequencing, staffing and county deployment plan (5 mks); risk, safeguards, quality-assurance, data and sustainability arrangements (5mks).	20
3	Qualifications and experience of key personnel	Team Leader (8 mks); TVET/RPL/CBET Specialist (6 mks); Labour-Market, Employer and Placement Specialist (7 mks); M&E/MIS Specialist (5 mks); Entrepreneurship and Green/Adaptive Enterprise Specialist (6 mks); Digital Job-Matching / ICT Specialist (4 mks); Gender, Safeguarding and Social Inclusion Specialist (4 mks).	40
4	Organizational and financial capacity	Management structure, field presence, quality systems, audited financial capacity, insurance, data-security and fiduciary arrangements.	10
5	Knowledge transfer and local sustainability	Practical approach to strengthening NACONEK and county counterparts, transferring tools and systems, and sustaining partnerships, placements and enterprise support after contract completion.	10
	TOTAL		100

L. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The contract shall be implemented on a lump-sum, deliverable-based basis. Payments shall be made only after submission and written acceptance of the relevant deliverable, receipt of a valid invoice and compliance with contractual, fiduciary and tax requirements. Routine monthly and quarterly reports are integral to the milestones and shall not attract separate payment unless stated in the contract.

Milestone	Accepted Deliverable	Payment
1	Inception Report and Integrated Implementation Framework	10%
2	Approved implementation support for market-analysis findings, entrepreneurship training framework and skills-to-work pathway activation	15%
3	Beneficiary, RPL/CBET, employer and placement implementation outputs and verified progress	20%

Milestone	Accepted Deliverable	Payment
	evidence	
4	Mid-term implementation, job-matching and job-fair integration report	20%
5	Second-phase implementation outputs, tracer-study integration and sustainability arrangements	20%
6	Final Completion and Sustainability Report and full handover package	15%
	TOTAL	100%

Where a milestone contains multiple outputs, NACONEK may withhold acceptance until all constituent outputs and supporting evidence are complete. No payment shall constitute acceptance of defective work or relieve the Firm of its obligations to correct errors, omissions or non-compliance.

M. CONFIDENTIALITY, SAFEGUARDING, CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND OWNERSHIP

- All beneficiary, employer, institutional and Project information shall be treated as confidential and used only for the assignment. Personal data shall be collected, stored, accessed, shared and retained only under approved procedures.
- The Firm and its personnel shall comply with applicable codes of conduct, safeguarding requirements, prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, occupational safety, anti-fraud and anti-corruption obligations and grievance procedures.
- The Firm shall disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and shall remain independent of entities seeking to receive contracts, sponsorships, placements or other benefits under the assignment.
- All reports, databases, tools, curricula adaptations, manuals, dashboards, photographs, videos and other outputs produced under the contract shall become the property of NACONEK, subject to the contract and applicable law.
- The Firm shall maintain appropriate professional, employer and public-liability insurance and shall be responsible for negligence, breach of professional duty, unauthorized disclosure, fraud or misconduct attributable to the Firm or its personnel.

N. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND ACCEPTANCE

Performance shall be assessed against the approved work plan, deliverable quality, timeliness, beneficiary and partner results, data reliability, fiduciary compliance, safeguarding, responsiveness to corrective actions, stakeholder satisfaction and knowledge transfer. NACONEK may issue written notices requiring correction of deficiencies within a specified period. Repeated failure to meet contractual standards may result in withholding of payment, replacement of personnel, application of contractual remedies or termination in accordance with the contract.

All final deliverables shall be signed by the authorized representative of the Consulting Firm. Where relevant, supporting databases, attendance records, assessment and certification evidence, partnership documents, placement records, financial records, beneficiary feedback and field-verification evidence shall accompany the submitted reports.