



Terms of Reference

Short-term Expertise - Career-Counselling Expert

Job title: Career Counselling Expert (Expertise in Higher Education / Career Development Centre Development)

Country of assignment: IRAQ (Erbil, Mosul)

Duration of assignment: Maximum of 28 days

Type of contract: Service contract (International)

Sector: Stability and crisis recovery, Education, Youth Support

Dates: 28 days starting on 15th of October 2021

Name of the project: Yanhad project - Promoting Civic Engagement, Employment and Entrepreneurship for Youth in Iraq

1. PRESENTATION OF EXPERTISE FRANCE

Expertise France (EF) is a public agency created on 1st January 2015 and merging 6 French public agencies under the supervision of the French Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economy and Finance with a strong inter-ministerial vocation. EF offers programme engineering and technical assistance by developing and implementing international cooperation actions worldwide. EF operates in various fields of development and institutional cooperation including safety and security reform, post-crisis/ stability, public health, human rights, strengthening of institutions and NGOs and governance. Carrying out large-scale, multi-stakeholder programmes, EF can ensure the cooperation between individuals, teams and institutions with very different statuses, cultures and specialties. Besides, EF has acquired a sound experience in administrative and financial management of large-scale international programmes.

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

In Iraq, the city of Mosul, ISIL's occupation from June 2014 to July 2017 caused a humanitarian catastrophe with grave human suffering and physical destruction. Nearly one million people were forced to flee the conflict, with over 31,000 houses destroyed or severely damaged, major disruption in public service provision, and water treatment and power plants contaminated with unprecedented quantities of explosive hazards and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). These damages and losses have resulted in increased levels of poverty and unemployment in Daesh formally controlled areas. Drawing on comprehensive assessments conducted by the Ministry of Planning, the World Bank estimates that reconstruction will take at least 10 years, with a financial requirement of at least \$80 billion for the entire country, including a large share needed to rebuild Ninewah province. A large range of donors already contribute to the reconstruction of Ninewah- infrastructures and house reconstruction, demining, soft reconstruction (economic recovery, capacity building) - but there is still a lot of needs to address in the humanitarian field as well as in terms of stabilization. The promotion of stabilization, the initiation of an effective

recovery and reconstruction process are crucial to prevent re-escalation and tackle some of the underlying social and economic drivers of instability in Iraq.

Nearly half of Iraq's population is under the age of 21, according to UN figures, making it one of the youngest populations in the world¹. Its population pyramid base is expanding and youth from 15 to 30 constitutes around 60% of its population². Despite the gradual improvement in the education level of youth, this group is still facing many challenges, the most critical of which is the increase of unemployment rates with almost 1 million within the 15-24 year range being jobless. Youth are exposed to vulnerability as a result of their lack of knowledge and skills necessary to adapt to a new post-conflict economic and social environment. Even those who graduate with a university degree are finding it difficult to find jobs as 80% of recent graduates are listed as unemployed. Persisting high unemployment rates and low prospects for decent jobs put many young people at risk of falling into a spiral of poverty and risk of violence and radicalization.

Weakness in fulfilling youth demands leaves Iraqi society vulnerable to risks of destabilization. Iraq's youth thus require investment, both in terms of the hard and soft skills required to meet the needs of a diversified economy; and of fostering greater tolerance and understanding than existed in their parents' generation. The youth are the change-makers and a positive force when they live in an environment that allows normal mental, psychological, and physical maturation and that provides employment opportunities, participation, and security.

In order to address these challenges, Expertise France designed the Yanhad project to support the Iraqi authorities to tackle some of the underlying social and economic drivers, with youth as the priority target group. This 2-year project (2020-2021) combines a three-fold approach:

1. Support to students of Mosul and Ninewah universities: to improve access to students of Mosul to more efficient career guidance services and to concrete opportunities for professional work experience, employment, and civic engagement.
2. Youth civic engagement: to engage youth through Iraqi CSO in community service projects and fostering dialogue with local authorities
3. Youth entrepreneurship: to encourage youth entrepreneurship through a network of accessible business incubators/accelerators programs for enterprises throughout the country

Yanhad project is implemented in partnership with the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI), The American University of Iraq Sulaimani (AUIS) and The Station for entrepreneurship, all well-recognized organizations in the CSO and private sector ecosystems.

3. REVITALIZING THE CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MOSUL

The first component of the Yanhad project specifically aims at revitalizing the campus of the Universities of Mosul. Located north-east of Mosul near the archaeological site of Nineveh, the University enrolled just over 40,000 students before ISIS occupation from June 2014. According to various eyewitnesses and articles, ISIS occupation severely affected the campus of the University of Mosul during 3 years: exams were postponed and/or cancelled and courses that ran counter to ISIS Caliphate objectives and values were suppressed, including classes in the fine arts, law, political and social sciences, tourism, sports, geography, and others. These measures combined with pre-university education system "reforms" that shortened primary and secondary education from twelve to eight years and repealed baccalaureate (bachelor) certification, all of which further disrupted university life. About 30% of enrolled university students, especially those close to graduation, remained on campus in the early months of the occupation. However,

¹ Based on population projections as Iraq last held a census in 1987.

² Mahdi Al-Alak, *Iraq Youth Empowerment – Challenges and Opportunities*, Central Statistical Organization, 2013.

university life gradually ground to a halt as religious police (Hisba) patrolled the campus for offenses (particularly by women), salary payments to professors stopped in mid-2015, and airstrikes on the city prompted a massive exodus of teachers and students to other universities, including the University of Kirkuk, where some students continued their studies. About 40% to 60% of the students remained in Mosul, having no option except to suspend their studies for several years. As the conflict intensified, ISIS used the Mosul University campus as a command centre and an armament factory, prohibiting access to entire areas and digging tunnels to secure movement. IS also built a prison, training camps, and an Internet surveillance outpost. IS weapons and explosives experts took-over science departments and colleges' laboratories and workshops. When IS faced defeat, it further disfigured the campus by setting booby-traps and burning buildings. The most emblematic – the central library – was left flame-ravaged only to be bombarded by international-coalition airstrikes.

Nearly three years after the liberation of Mosul, classes have resumed at the universities, even though many students, professors, and teachers are still missing. Renovation work on some war-damaged buildings is still ongoing under UNDP and REFAATO leadership, including 90 reconstruction and equipment projects for buildings and laboratories. Beyond the need to rehabilitate campus physical infrastructure, interviews with administrators, professors, and students from universities identified other needs such as promoting post-graduation employment for students and stimulating the social and cultural life on the campus. They were full of ideas for ways to reinvigorate campus life and give students an opportunity to put their knowledge into practice. An absence of formal student organizations and financial-aid mechanisms on campus means such ideas struggle to materialize. Students and student organizations also lack knowledge on how to set up and manage a project.

In order to encourage student-led initiatives, Expertise France set up a first grant scheme in 2019 through a one-year pilot project funded by the French MoFA, coupled with methodological and technical guidance, so that students' ideas can emerge and contribute to the revitalisation of the campus. This fund financed 22 individual and collective projects on various topics, such as the reforestation of areas affected by military operations, the creation of an app to help people reaching healthcare facilities in Ninewah, the publication of an English magazine with editorial content about Mosul, the performance of air quality test on the campus or the printing of 3D virtual artefacts to restore the destroyed Mosul archaeological heritage.

4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER FOR MOSUL AND NINEVEH UNIVERSITIES

Upon graduation, students in Mosul face great difficulties finding employment locally because the private sector suffers from sluggish economic activity and the public sector sees hiring freezes for civil servants, a traditional source of jobs³. Students generally have low employability because they lack work experience, having been exposed to few opportunities for internships or work-study projects. In addition, students lack the soft skills needed to search for a job. Such difficulties primarily affect technology and engineering graduates.

Since the career centres have been operating for less than three years in Mosul, they still provide little direct support to students who want employment or work experience. For the most part, the 23 career counsellors at the Mosul University career centre and 2 at Ninewah University career centre (25 in total) are specialists in their fields but lack proper training in professional-career guidance.

³ In 2011, 43.5% of workers were government employees employed at the local, provincial or national level, compared with an average of 18% in OECD countries, according to *Corruption and Integrity in Iraq's Public Sector*, UNDP, 2011.

The project thus aims at reinforcing the capacities of the career-centres, and build on the previous work conducted by CNAM experts, on particular on the methodological guide developed to guide counsellors on what is expected from a working career-development centre.

Career counsellors need a good knowledge of academic and training programmes, and an ability to analyse the local labour market. They also need strong interpersonal skills in order to talk to students and build their confidence, help with decision-making, and personalise coaching methods while taking disability, gender, and other aspects of diversity into account. Between 2019 and 2021, they benefited from several training and coaching sessions delivered by international experts (mainly French Institution called CNAM-INETOP) mobilized by EF. In order to make structural and lasting changes, these capacity-building actions need to be strengthened.

5- OVERALL purpose of the assignment

More specifically, the objective is to build on a guide called “methodological guide” developed by CNAM-INETOP, on which the counsellors were remotely trained. This guide is a very good basis but there is a need for an expert with strong expertise and local knowledge of Iraq to adapt, simplify, translate and contextualize this guide. In addition, one or several refresher sessions should be provided to counsellors on the simplified tools, in order to ensure that career development centre can start using the guide on the long-term, improving it and ensure ownership of the tools.

EF is recruiting a short-term career-counselling Expert to support of 25 Career Development Centre (CDC) advisors for Mosul and Nineveh universities through four main activities:

- 1) Get feedback from CDC counselors on methodological guide and tools that were presented to them and training sessions they received; assess their needs following previous sessions to build on their feedback for the refresher course (assessment phase)
- 2) Review and simplify the existing “methodological guide” and training materials developed by CNAM-INETOP for CDCs in Mosul and Ninewah Universities (150 pages). This guide is a strong basis on what is expected from CDCs, but should be further adapted to the Iraqi context, also taking into considerations means and resources of CDCs
- 3) Coordinate the translation and supervise translated deliverables of the methodological guide (*translation costs will be covered separately by Expertise France*)
- 4) Develop simplified tools (fiches, powerpoint presentations, toolkit) based on the methodological guide, in Arabic, to facilitate usage for CDC counsellors
- 5) Facilitate one or several training sessions (depending on methodology developed by the expert) for the 25 CDC counselors on the newly developed tools and on simplified methodological guide (in Arabic)
- 6) Write a final report explaining main achievements of the assignment, including tools developed, and changes observed in counselors’ understanding of the methodological guide.

Timeline and Proposed Methodology (number of days per phase is flexible and can be fine-tuned with expert)

- 1) **Inception Phase (3 days):** reading of existing project documents and guide, including project objective, existing tools and exchanging with project team to fine-tune the objective of the assignment. Expert will provide a detailed workplan of the assignment at the end of this phase.

- 2) **Assessment Phase (5 days):** meeting with CDC and universities representatives understanding the needs of CDC counselors, their understanding of the methodological guide, their feedback on previous training sessions received. Conduct a pre-test with CDC counselor
- 3) **Tools Adaptation Phase and designing training materials (12 days):** coordinating translation of existing guide, simplifying and contextualizing the guide, developing user-friendly tools in Arabic and ensure they are friendly to the Iraqi context
- 4) **Training Phase (5 days):** conduct the training sessions on the developed tools, post-tests to evaluate progress made by the counsellors
- 5) **Reporting Phase (3 days):** writing the final report and submitting to EF

***NB:** Please note that, due to the current COVID-19 crisis and the restrictive measures in force for the next few weeks in Iraq, the schedule for carrying out the mission may be subject to adjustments which will be communicated later.*

Expected Deliverables:

1. Methodology of the Education workshops (including any presentation or guidance document provided to the Advisors)
2. New version of the translated and contextualized methodological guide
3. Newly-developed tools (simplified and contextualized)
4. Training Session report including the agenda, list of participants and materials used
5. Final report with an analysis of the progress made by counsellors, lessons learned, need for additional capacity building, room for improvement etc.

The trainer/institute however should be responsible for the:

1. Training Agenda
2. Training Materials (Curriculum).
3. Pre/post tests
4. Attendance Sheets (format provided by EF)
5. Final training Report
6. Training satisfaction

Skills and experience of the Expert:

- Relevant university degree (eg. Higher Education, Vocational Training, Political or social science, international development, monitoring and evaluation);
- At least 10-year experience in technical or vocational training / career counselling / higher education programming
- Good understanding of the Iraqi context. Knowledge of the Iraqi Higher Education system would be a plus.
- Excellent training and facilitating skills with ability to adapt to a diverse multicultural environment;
- Excellent command of English and Arabic (oral and written).