



# **The Kenya National Examinations Council**

## **REQUEST FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANCY ON EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A CONSULTANCY FIRM IN EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH**

#### **DURATION OF CONSULTANCY: 100 DAYS WITHIN 12 MONTHS**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Government of Kenya (GoK) has partnered with the World Bank, the Global Partnership for Education, and other partners to reduce regional disparities in learning outcomes, improve the retention of girls in upper primary education, and strengthen systems for delivering equitable education outcomes. This is in line with the aspirations of Kenya's Vision 2030. The Vision's Social Pillar singles out the education and training system as a vehicle to drive Kenya's efforts towards becoming an upper-middle income economy. The partnership is in the Kenya Primary Education Equity in Learning (KPEEL) Program.

The Ministry of Education through Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) is implementing Competency Based Assessment (CBA) as guided by the principles of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) outlined in the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF), 2019. Assessment is an important component in the learning process and the paradigm shift from over-reliance on summative assessment to a blend between formative and summative assessments calls for continuous appraisal of both learning and assessment strategies. This development comes with the need to provide a variety of assessment modes and reporting procedures that reflect on the different individual needs of learners. This will help identify their areas of strengths and interest in order to nurture

and develop their talents. CBA focuses on developing an array of competencies and values in addition to the knowledge and skills of the learning areas. This change therefore calls for capacity building of KNEC staff, teachers, and review of the assessment systems and procedures.

Research in educational assessment is critical in making informed choices about suitable assessments for different levels of education. Sharing of research findings to relevant stakeholders ensures the right information is available positively contributing to improved learning outcomes. Good practices in knowledge management in the envisioned Educational Assessment Resource Centre will influence assessment experts and researchers in implementing the education reforms.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

The Republic of Kenya has made significant progress in the implementation of free primary and secondary education. This has resulted in the increase of learner enrolment currently at more than 1,200,000 per grade in primary school and about 900,000 per class in secondary school. This increase in enrolment has strained the limited resources currently available for assessment. Despite these significant improvements in access and participation, enhancing learning outcomes presents the greatest challenge. The classroom pedagogy and assessment practices are still largely content-focused, obscuring the achievement of competencies which is the focus of CBC and CBA.

Unless the assessment practices are strong enough with a focus on assessment for learning to provide feedback on learning and instruction, obtaining reliable information on the learning outcomes, measuring progress and equity in learning, will not be easy and the learning inequality will continue to persist and possibly widen. This calls for a need to further invest in improving the quality of teaching and learning with an emphasis on pedagogical approaches and assessment methods that ensure learners develop and acquire the expected knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

The Competency Based Curriculum aims at nurturing every learner's potential and therefore the assessment must align itself to this demand using a variety of assessment

approaches. KNEC needs to embrace alternative assessments in identifying the learner's potential. Tracking and reporting of learner's progress through cumulative evidence generated in the process of learning is critical and capacity building in this area will be necessary.

To provide feedback and guide pedagogy at the classroom level, KNEC has introduced formative assessments currently referred to as School Based Assessments (SBA) in line with the Competency Based Assessment Framework (CBAF), 2021. KNEC develops and provides standardized assessment tools which are uploaded in a portal accessed by schools to download, administer, score and upload the scores. The inclusion of assessment for learning and its effective implementation is therefore a timely intervention. As KNEC takes up these new and extra responsibilities, there is a pressing need for capacity building of its staff and upgrading of its systems to align them to the new demands. KNEC seeks to ride on enhanced ICT systems to enable establishment of an item bank for item authoring, item development, test assembly, administration, analysis and statistical reporting. This demands heavy investment in ICT skills and infrastructure to conduct the assessments and maintain the assessment records. The digitisation of processes will enhance efficiency and capacity to handle the large number of assessments and the ever-increasing enrolment.

To transform education in Kenya a Presidential working party on education reforms gave its recommendations in 2023 requiring KNEC to develop a criteria for placing learners in the curriculum pathways as they join Senior school. This being a new approach, KNEC will require to undertake extensive research to determine the most suitable assessments for Grade 9 assessment, grading and reporting of learners' outcomes.

### **3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY**

The main objective will be to capacity build the KNEC staff in educational assessment and research and guide the alignment of test development, research, data analysis, reporting and administration activities to the Competency Based Assessment approach.

The specific objectives are to:-

- 3.1 train KNEC staff on development, analysis, grading and reporting of summative assessments conducted at key stages of Basic Education.
- 3.2 strengthen the capacity of KNEC staff on development, conduct of valid and reliable competency based assessments with emphasis on formative assessments.
- 3.3 build capacity of KNEC to develop Alternative assessments and accompanying criteria for guiding learners in the choice of pathways in Senior school(Arts and Sports; Social Sciences; Science Technology Engineering & Mathematics (STEM).
- 3.4 guide on appropriate assessments that are specific to the pathways in Senior school for grading and certification.
- 3.5 train and support test developers on psychometrics and psychometric analytics, and guide the alignment of the test development and administration processes to the competency based assessment approach and current global trends.
- 3.6 enhance the security of test development and administration processes which ride on digital devices, software and online platforms.
- 3.7 train KNEC staff on research in educational assessment.
- 3.8 train and support research officers in data analysis, grading and reporting.
- 3.9 support KNEC in developing training materials, modules, manuals for competency based assessment.
- 3.10 support KNEC to utilise the big data in assessments to analyse trends and package the information for decision making.

#### **4.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES FOR THE CONSULTANCY**

The Kenya National Examinations Council with support from the World Bank, will engage the services of a consultancy firm to review the existing strategy for CBA implementation and scale it up to adequately support both formative and summative assessments.

The specific tasks for the consultancy firm will be to:

- 4.1 support KNEC in development of an Assessment Framework to guide assessments at the Basic education.
  - (a) Preparation of Assessment Framework, test blueprint, Item writing, Item review and test assembly.

- (b) Pretesting of items.
- (c) Item analysis using Classical Test Theory, Item Response Theory and Generalizability theory.
- (d) Large scale test administration, scoring and processing of results.
- (e) Subject specific item analysis and reporting.
- (f) Standard setting of assessments and examinations.
- (g) Reporting of assessment results.
- (h) Preparation of assessment and examination feedback reports.

4.2 strengthen the capacity of KNEC staff on development, conduct of valid and reliable formative assessment.

- (a) Diversify assessment types and methods.
- (b) Improve dependability and accuracy of teacher judgements.
- (c) Improve tracking of learner's progress.
- (d) Statistical analysis and moderation of School Based Assessment scores.
- (e) Reporting of assessment through online platforms.
- (f) Security of formative assessments.

4.3 capacity build KNEC staff in construction of Alternative assessments that will be critical in the choice of pathways in Senior school.

- (a) Assessment of competencies, values, Pertinent and Contemporary Issues and Community Service Learning.
- (b) Development of authentic tasks/assessments through various assessment formats.

4.4 train and support KNEC staff in conducting educational research in the following areas.

- (a) Development of data collection instruments.
- (b) Conducting reliable action research on assessment practices.
- (c) Data analysis and reporting of research findings.
- (d) Report writing.
- (e) Knowledge management

## 5.0 EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The consultancy firm will be contracted to work within timelines that fall within 12 months effective upon signing of the contract. KNEC will periodically evaluate the performance of the consultants in reference to deliverables in table 1 below:-

**Table 1: Expected deliverables**

No	Item	Deliverables
5.1	Support KNEC in development of an Assessment Framework to guide assessments at the Basic education.	Train and develop training materials (both online/soft and hard copies) on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Preparation of test blueprint, Item writing, Item review and test assembly;</li> <li>b) pretesting</li> <li>c) item analysis using Classical Test Theory, Item Response Theory and Generalizability theory.</li> <li>d) large scale test administration, scoring and processing of results;</li> <li>e) subject specific item analysis and reporting</li> <li>f) standard setting;</li> <li>g) reporting of results;</li> <li>h) preparation of assessment and examination feedback reports for different stakeholders.</li> </ul>
5.2	Strengthen the knowledge and capacity of KNEC staff on development, conduct of valid and reliable formative assessment. (working together to develop content)	Train and develop training materials including online content on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Improving dependability and accuracy of teacher judgements;</li> <li>b) diversifying assessment types and methods;</li> <li>c) assessment of competencies (21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills) and values;</li> </ul>

No	Item	Deliverables
		d) statistical analysis and moderation of School Based Assessment scores for comparability (review one subject of past SBA design to inform comparability); e) reporting of formative and summative assessment.
5.3	Capacity build KNEC staff in construction of Alternative assessments that will be critical in the choice of pathways in Senior school.	Develop training materials and conduct training on the following: a) Assessment of core competencies, values, and Community Service Learning. b) Development of authentic tasks/assessments.
5.4	Train and support KNEC staff in conducting educational research.	Train and support research officers to conduct effective research to inform assessment processes. a) design of research topics; b) development of data collection instruments; c) conduct research on assessment practices; d) data analysis using qualitative and quantitative softwares. e) prepare assessment research reports. f) dissemination of research reports through conferences, symposiums and other suitable channels; g) knowledge management.

## 6.0 WORK PLAN

The assignment is expected to take 100 days upon signing contract which on implementation will include submission of an inception report to the presentation of the exit report as shown in the table 2:

**Table 2: Workplan for the activities**

<b>S/no</b>	<b>Description of deliverables</b>	<b>Target due dates</b>	<b>Estimated number of days</b>	<b>Review and approval required</b>
6.1	An inception report on the consultancy's interpretation of the TOR, plan of action, timelines and guarantee of adherence to the TOR.		<b>10</b>	<b>KNEC</b>
6.2	Report and training materials developed for the following training; a) Item writing of different item types; b) development of authentic assessments (Performance Based Assessment, Multiple Choice Questions, Practical, Project based Assessment, Portfolio assessment); c) tracking of learner's progress; d) assessment of competencies values and community service learning; e) statistical analysis and moderation of SBA scores for comparability including the analysis of current SBA design for reporting progress over time; f) Reporting assessment.		<b>40</b>	<b>KNEC</b>
6.3	Report and materials developed on psychometrics analysis training and recommendation for further training needs.		<b>20</b>	<b>KNEC</b>



6.4	<p>Reports and materials developed for the following trainings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Procedures for conducting research in educational assessment;</li> <li>b) designing a data collection manual;</li> <li>c) data analysis using qualitative and quantitative approaches;</li> <li>d) development of qualitative and quantitative feedback reports;</li> <li>e) strategy on dissemination of research reports to stakeholders.</li> </ul>		<b>30</b>	<b>KNEC</b>
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**7.0 EXPECTED EXPERIENCE OF THE CONSULTANCY FIRM**

The consultancy firm should have experts in Education, Research, Assessment, Statistics with extensive experience in training in psychometrics, Competency Based Assessment and research in Education. The consultancy firm shall:

- 7.1 demonstrate experience (contracts and recommendations from past clients) in implementing high stake national level examinations and monitoring assessments for at least 10 (Ten) years.
- 7.2 demonstrate evidence (contracts and recommendations from past clients) of having participated in large scale monitoring of learner’s progress through formative assessments for at least 10 (Ten) years;
- 7.3 show documented (attach evidence) international experience in designing Competency Based Assessments in a range of subjects such as Mathematics, English, Sciences and Humanities ;
- 7.4 show evidence of training in Competency Based Assessment;
- 7.5 demonstrate (attach evidence) capacity to support KNEC in design, implementation and evaluation of online assessments;
- 7.6 show a thorough understanding of emerging global assessment trends;
- 7.7 demonstrate at least 10 (Ten) years experience in conducting research in educational assessment;

- 7.8 demonstrate evidence of data analytical and report writing skills;
- 7.9 demonstrate excellent IT knowledge and skills;

## **8.0 QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CONSULTANCY FIRM**

- 8.1 The core team should comprise at least 10 (Ten) qualified professionals with at least a Master's degree in Education, Assessment, research, statistics with extensive experience in training in psychometrics, competency based assessment.
- 8.2 The team leader should have a Master's degree, a PhD is an added advantage with international experience in managing teams in the training and delivery of assessments.
- 8.3 The firm **must** (Mandatory) submit the following statutory documents:-
  - I. Copy of Company Registration Certificates (registered company incorporated in Kenya under the Companies Act CAP 486).
  - II. Copy of Valid Tax Compliance Certificate,
  - III. Evidence of physical location of office by providing certified copies of premises ownership / lease, and utility bills.
  - IV. Copy of company's list of directors, beneficial owners, name of proprietor or names of partners (Copy of CR12) issued within the last one year and showing the list of directors
  - V. In case of Joint venture, attach joint venture agreement
  - VI. FOR FOREIGN FIRMS, PROVIDE EQUIVALENT OF ALL THE ABOVE WHERE APPLICABLE.

## **9.0 WHAT THE CONSULTANCY FIRM SHOULD SUBMIT**

- 9.1 A proposal demonstrating understanding of the scope of work and proposed work-plan indicating timelines against deliverables;
- 9.2 Qualification and assessment of all research experts to be involved in the assignment;
- 9.3 profile indicating previous consultancies, experiences and references.

## 10.0 KNEC INPUT AND COUNTERPART PERSONNEL

10.1 The consultancy firm will be provided with relevant and existing information on the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) assessment system;

10.2 KNEC will provide the consultancy firm with relevant documents including curriculum and assessment frameworks.

10.3 KNEC will facilitate the review and validation workshop of the draft documents prepared by the consultancy firm;

10.4 KNEC will arrange, invite and facilitate stakeholders and staff for meetings, workshops and/or seminars.

## 11.0 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The payment schedule will be executed annually as table 3

**Table 3: Payment Schedule**

S/no	Deliverables	Proportion of Payment
11.1	Submission and adoption of an inception report and work plan with timelines for all the tasks in the TOR.	10%
11.2	- Training and support on Competency Based Assessment. - Development of training materials, modules. - Training and support on Psychometrics.	40%
11.3	-Training and conducting Research in Educational assessment. -Analysis of big assessment data for decision making.	40%
11.4	submission and adoption of a comprehensive exit report	10%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **12.0 REPORTING**

- 12.1 The consultancy firm and KNEC will agree on the dates for regular meetings. It is estimated that at least one such meeting will take place every 2 months throughout the assignment but the frequency may increase depending on the on-going activity.
- 12.2 The consultancy firm will work closely with KNEC and report to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), KNEC.
- 12.3 The consultancy firm will submit reports and documents to the CEO and the KNEC KPEEL technical working team focal person as may be required from time to time.

## **13.0 METHODOLOGY**

The consultancy firm must provide, in the Request for Proposal(RFP), a clear detailed description of:

- 13.1 The methodology to be employed in undertaking the assignment in all phases:
  - (a) Design
  - (b) Implementation strategy and work plan.
  - (c) Monitoring and Evaluation schedule
- 13.2 Expression of Interest (EOI) accompanied by copies of relevant documents and testimonials should be submitted in plain sealed envelope clearly marked with the contract reference number and title of the consultancy in two sets.

## **14.0 APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Applications accompanied by relevant documents and testimonials should be submitted in a plain sealed envelope clearly marked and sent to the address below:

The Principal Secretary, ministry of Education  
State Department for Basic Education, Attn: Head of Supply Chain  
Management  
Postal Address: P.O. Box 30040, Nairobi, Kenya Code: 00100  
City: Nairobi Zip code: +254  
Tel: (0)20 318581 Ext.30413  
Fax: 254-020-318581  
Email: [ppo@education.go.ke](mailto:ppo@education.go.ke)