

Kurdistan Region: Socio-Economic Infrastructure Needs Assessment, 2014 (SEINA II)

TORs: Individual specialized consultant: Sr. Information and Communication Technology Specialist

In order to sustain the significant gains that the Kurdistan Region has registered in promoting investment and in expanding the supply of basic services and to ensure the continuity of its development strategy, the KRG launched the Regional Development Vision for 2020, which provides a framework for policy development, defines priorities, and outlines a strategy to improve opportunities for the people.

To identify institutional and human capacity gaps and remove barriers hampering private investment and public-private partnerships for development, the Ministry of Planning commissioned the Socio-Economic Infrastructure Needs Assessment (SEINA) that was produced jointly with UNDP Iraq and released in 2012. Since then, progress has been registered in certain sectors whereas public investment in other areas has not attracted private capital as expected, the uneven impact prompting the need for a new assessment of development infrastructure gaps. Consequently, the Ministry of Planning decided to undertake three studies in 2014 which, together make-up the KR Sustainable Development Initiative (KR-SDI). They are:

- A revised SEINA II designed to update the gap/solutions analysis conducted in SEINA I, to add some sectors not studied in 2012 (ICT, financial services), and additional analysis of some strategic sectors, also in the light of RDV2020 goals;
- The Skills Needs Assessment (SNA), and,
- The Kurdistan Region Enterprise Census (KREC).

UNDP has launched a Strategy and Global Initiative to guide its work on Extractive Industries for Sustainable Development. The UNDP Global Initiative will provide programme management for both SEINA II and SNA, and has recruited a Senior Economist/Team Coordinator with primary responsibility for the carrying-out of SEINA 2014, including the preparation of the task and leadership of the main field mission.

The SEINA 2014 will be a follow-up and update to the SEINA 2012 and include all the sectors, covered previously:

- Hard infrastructure: Electricity, Water and Wastewater, Natural resources (water, hydrocarbons), Transportation, Telecommunications), in support to the three leading growth sectors of Agriculture, Industry, and Tourism;
- Hard infrastructure of the social sectors Health and Education; and
- Institutional infrastructure (Financial services, Industrial zones, Environment, Skills supply).

To ensure consistency in the socio-economic infrastructure needs assessment exercise, SEINA 2014 will employ the same methodology used for the 2012 version (and use largely the same team of experts) while widening the scope of the study to include sectors that are critical to a modern economy, namely ICT and financial services. Data analyses, interviews, scouting missions as well as a priority agenda agreed upon with the KRG-MinPlan will be used for this study. Innovative financing solutions for the infrastructure investment needs will be sought, including private finance and PPPs.

For the conduct of this task, it has been decided to acquire the services of a Senior Information and Communications Technology Specialist for a period of 20 days which will be spent in the field in Kurdistan Region including both fact-finding and reporting, in the period April/May 2015.

TORS: Scope of the Assignment

The objective of the assignment is to assess critical issues affecting ICT development in short to long-term focusing on the areas of infrastructure, policy, applications, institutions and financing.

This will entail:

- The assessment of broad needs within the ICT sector in the medium and long term to support the social and economic development of the KR-I and to promote public as well as private sector investments.
- The identification of a short, medium and long term action plans in support of ICT as a driver for social and economic development in KR, and
- The identification of potential collaborating partners in ICT sector among development partners and private sector.

Such collaboration would also serve to minimize duplication of efforts and to exploit complementarities through knowledge and information sharing as well as financing.

More specifically, this assignment will address:

- Status of the formulation of an ICT policy and ICT strategy
- Analysis of the challenges, constraints, gaps and opportunities related to the ICT sector and other economic sectors in KR, in particular in terms of infrastructure, policies, institutions and human capacity
- Analysis of the short to long-term investments and development needs in the ICT sector as documented by KRG itself and other partners
- Review of national, regional, and international initiatives that would serve to improve interconnectivity for KR and the ICT sector in general
- Analysis of current human and institutional capacity gaps to be filled to sustain the immediate demand as well as the capacity requirements for growth over the short term
- Analysis of actual and potential interventions to relax the HR constraint/gaps (e.g. engaging the Kurdish Diaspora?)
- Status of the preparation of potential ICT project proposals that could be identified and proposed for financing by the KR Capital Investment Budget.

At the end of the field mission, the consultant will draft a preliminary report for the Team Coordinator containing major preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations. Two weeks later, the consultant will prepare a final report confirming preliminary findings and describing and analyzing earlier points and containing a costed and prioritized investment programme, and a set of recommendations on the best manner to implement the investment proposed.

Required competences

The consultant will have a university degree in information and communications technology, or similar, from a recognized university and a minimum of ten years' experience in analyzing ICT networks and infrastructure, including hard wired, optic fiber, and wireless systems. S/he will have experience working in middle-income countries such as Iraq's KR and similar. S/he will also be familiar with policies needed to develop and intensify supply and usage of ICT.

Application procedures:

Individual Consultants are responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director. They should also have their own accident/health insurance coverage. Consultants are also required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under dss.un.org.

UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.