Terms of reference (ToR) for the procurement of services below the EU threshold

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

PUBLIC

Updating and Finalising the Draft National Transition Strategy for the Refugee Response	**Project number/ cost centre: S-01070-011** **Tender number**

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0. List of abbreviations

CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
NDP	National Development Plan
NPF	National Partnership Forum
NTS	National Transition Management
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
ToRs	Terms of reference

1. Context

With close to 2 million refugees, principally from South Sudan (52%), the Democratic Republic of Congo (33%) and Sudan (5%), Uganda is the largest refugee hosting country in Africa. As of September 2026, there have been over 57,000 new arrivals since the beginning of the year. Uganda's open-door policy and progressive settlement model - under which refugees have the right to work, establish businesses and access services alongside their hosts – informed the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).

Yet the protracted, large-scale displacement, combined with 3% annual population growth, places severe pressure on health, education and water infrastructure and services in refugee-hosting districts. Many facilities in refugee settlements were established as an emergency response decades ago. Recognizing that parallel, partner-managed systems are not sustainable in the long-run, Uganda has been shifting to a development-oriented, integrated approach to service provision, albeit with continued strong support from humanitarian partners. However, there is currently no formal mechanism for handing over partner facilities to Government. Where handovers occur without mutually planned arrangements (typically when partner programmes end) facilities risk underutilisation, poor operation and maintenance, and declining service standards. Government has perceived such uncoordinated exits as burden-shifting rather than burden-sharing.

To address this challenge and ensure sustainable, high-quality service delivery for both refugees and host communities, Uganda pledged at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum to continue managing and integrating infrastructure and services, particularly in the health, education, and water sectors, into government systems through a phased approach, in line with national requirements. The Government of Uganda also committed to develop a transition strategy, to provide the guiding framework for these processes.

To fulfil this pledge, the Government of Uganda, led by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), together with the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and sector ministries (Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) developed a National Transition Strategy (NTS). The strategy provides guidance for a phased, ten-year transfer of partner-managed facilities and services in the health, education and water sectors to Government planning and management, while highlighting the need for continued partner support. It is supported by sector transition roadmaps and detailed implementation, M&E and cost annexes. The NTS was validated by stakeholders at the CRRF Steering Group in March 2025 but has not yet been presented to and approved by the ministries' top management.

Need for updating the strategy:

The operating environment has changed fundamentally since the drafting of the NTS, requiring key revisions to the strategy. Notably, these changes include:

- **A sharp decline in humanitarian funding and a changed funding landscape:** by the end of 2025, the Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan (UCRRP) was only 31% funded (compared to 46% funding end of 2024). Abrupt cuts by major donors - including the suspension and restructuring of United States foreign assistance, as well as the decision of Education Cannot Wait (ECW) to deprioritise Uganda - has severely impacted service delivery in the health, education and water sector for refugees and host communities.

- **Significant gaps in service delivery and accelerated unplanned exit by partners:** the above funding cuts have had wide-reaching consequences: besides huge cuts to food assistance, the funding shortages have among other things led to dire gaps in the funding coverage for teachers, health workers and stock-outs of essential medicine. While emergency funding from the United States through the Regional Humanitarian Fund for Eastern and Southern Africa (ESAHF), a pooled fund managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) has brought short-term relief for life-saving activities (including interventions in health and WASH), and the mobilisation of bridge funding for education by donors has mitigated the adverse effects for refugee education until September 2026, this funding is only temporary and does not guarantee sustained service delivery beyond 2026 onwards. The services that the NTS intended to transition in phased and planned manner therefore risk ending abruptly and unmanaged.

- **Given the above developments, the need for a sustainability plan to ensure continuity of service delivery in the short-, medium, and long-term:** Due to the funding cuts, the discourse has shifted from Transition strategy to the need for a sustainability plan, that clearly outlines how Government and partners will cover the costs in the short, medium and long-term.

These developments overtake some of the key assumptions of the NTS. Its cost estimate of USD 1.88 billion over ten years significantly exceeds any realistic projection of available resources. The financing mechanism has not yet been formally endorsed by donors and needs to be rethought given the current context. Due to the current funding shortages, transition is happening by default – unmanaged and without a clear strategy – rather than through a planned and phased approach. An urgent, focused update is therefore required to ensure that the Strategy presented to MoFPED and sector ministries' top management is realistic, fit-for-purpose, financeable, jointly owned by Government and its partners and outlines a clear sustainability plan.

The assignment is financed through the Study and Expert Fund "Supporting Uganda in the Sustainability of its Refugee Response" financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Its objective is to strengthen the sustainability of the Ugandan Refugee Response through technical support to the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). The main focus areas are to strengthen coordination structures, and to support the implementation and monitoring of the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) Pledges.

To this end, the Study and Expert Fund partly finances one international Humanitarian Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus advisor and one national advisor who provide technical support to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) Secretariat in OPM. Where required, support is also provided in the form of short-term consultancies.

While the assignment is supported by GIZ, it will be steered by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) and OPM (CRRF Secretariat and the Department of Refugees).

2. Tasks to be performed by the contractor

To update and finalise the National Transition Strategy and its annexes so that it becomes a leaner, fit-for-purpose strategy that is ready to be submitted to top management. The NTS should be updated in such a way that it becomes a **Transition and Sustainability Strategy** which:

(i) reflects the current funding landscape and operational realities
(ii) contains a realistic, prioritised and evidence-based budget for the short, medium and long term for the three sectors of health, education and water.
(iii) proposes financing mechanisms that secure endorsement from both Government and donors
(iv) clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of Government, humanitarian and development partners
(v) clearly outlines a plan for sustainable service delivery in the health, education and water sectors in the short, medium and long-term
(vi) becomes a leaner, more focused document that secures high-level political buy-in.

Specifically, the consultants will undertake the following tasks:

1. **Rapid Situational Update:** Conduct a rapid situational and funding-landscape update covering developments from January 2025 to date, including donor policy shifts, actual and projected resource envelopes, partner exits and service-delivery impacts in the three sectors, as well as lessons learned from the discussions held on bridge funding to cover service gaps from January 2026 to September 2026:

   - Based on data provided by UNHCR and ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), document the current status of transition on the ground (which facilities have been handed over and which still need to be handed over (i.e. which facilities have been “coded” in the case of health and education or handed over to utilities in the case of water), as well as staffing and supply gaps. In the case of coded facilities, specify how many staff are on Government payroll vs staff paid by partners.

   - Map the current and projected funding landscape (funding gaps and confirmed and indicative commitments by donor, instrument and sector for the short-term (years 1-2), medium term (3-5) and long term (5-10))

2. **Develop a realistic phased budget and sustainability strategy:** Clearly define the short, medium and long-term needs in the water, health and education sector and based on these needs, revise the cost estimates into a realistic, prioritised budget across the short term (years 1–2), medium term (years 3–5) and long term (years 5–10), with clearly costed scenarios and an affordability analysis against the Government’s Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and National Development Plan (NDP IV), as well as projected partner funding. The re-costing should ensure a balanced budget across the three sectors (as the current NTS shows large imbalances between health, education and water)

   - The costing should distinguish between infrastructure investment, wage, non-wage recurrent and O&M costs by sector and by phase (short, medium, long term).

   - Define criteria-based prioritisation of interventions (e.g. life-saving measures, service continuity, high-density zones etc.) and distinguish between at least 2 scenarios (an

ideal (but still realistic) funding scenario and a minimum-service continuity scenario that absolutely requires funding). Each scenario should include explicit service-level implications.

- By analysing the affordability and fiscal space against the MTEF, NDP IV, realistic domestic revenue measures and projected partner funds, come up with a realistic cost-sharing trajectory, outlining which costs can be born by Government, and what needs to be covered by humanitarian and development partners (by financial year). The cost-sharing trajectory should reflect the phased approach.

- The financing and sustainability strategy should specify the phased human-resource absorption onto Government payrolls, infrastructure and O&M, as well as community ownership and O&M. It should also specify criteria for joint Government/partner planning for implementation and exit strategies, as well as transition criteria and handover protocols.

- The sustainability strategy should clearly specify the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, including a clear distinction of roles of Government and humanitarian and development parters within the Humanitarian-Development Nexus

- Identifying the current efficiency lapses and expected gains in addressing these lapses

- Identify the capacity gaps of stakeholders that need to be addressed before handing over

3. **Develop jointly endorsed financing mechanisms**: Based on structured discussions with MoFPED, sector ministries, humanitarian and development partners, as well as International Financing Institutions (IFIs), propose financing mechanisms that secure buy-in and endorsement from all involved parties.

   - Critically reassess the feasibility of financing mechanisms currently proposed in the NTS (willingness of stakeholders to contribute, governance, fiduciary arrangements, fund manager options, safeguards etc.) against donor requirements and Government public financial management (PFM) systems

   - Assess and propose alternative or complementary instruments and sources of funding suited to the new funding landscape (including Government funding, World-Bank/IFI financing, e.g. through the IDA Window for Host Communities and Refugees, other donor funding, arrangements such as the planned Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), planned under the leadership of the Government of Uganda and the Resident Coordinator's office etc.) The proposal needs to clearly outline which type of costs can potentially be covered through which mechanism and in which sectors these funding mechanisms can be applied.

   - Recommend feasible processes that can enable successful Government–donor negotiation sessions to agree on a feasible financing architecture and obtain documented endorsement (e.g. presentation and validation at the National Partnership Forum (NFP))

4. **Consolidate the Strategy and support validation**

- Update and condense the strategy and sector roadmaps for consistency with revised budget, financing and sustainability arrangements (the updated strategy should have a maximum of 30 pages (excluding annexes) that can be submitted to top management.

- Condense the most relevant aspects of the strategy into a short executive summary (around 5 pages)

- Support validation meetings, including with the NTS technical reference group, the District Engagement Forum, the leadership of the involved line ministries, as well as the Local Development Partners Group (LDPG) and the National Partnership Forum (NPF). The support should include the preparation of presentation decks

- Incorporate feedback and finalise the strategy and annex volumes

The consultancy will build on – not repeat – the 2024-2025 strategy development process. The approach will combine a desk review of updated data (including data from UNHCR/OPM, UN RCO/OCHA, MoFPED budget data and MoH, MoES and MWE), as well as key informant interviews/focus group discussions/structured dialogue sessions convened with MoFPED and OPM.

It will be a highly consultative process, steered by Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and OPM (CRRF Secretariat and Department of Refugees). The consultancy will discuss and endorse the revised strategy with a) the technical reference group that was constituted during the development of the NTS, b) the District Engagement Forum b) the leadership of the involved line ministries (MoFPED, OPM, MWE, MoH, and MoES) and c) the Local Development Partners Group (LDPG).

MoFPED, OPM/the CRRF Secretariat will facilitate stakeholder engagement with government representatives and other stakeholders such as the CRRF Development Partners Group and the LDPG. A representative of MoFPED and/or OPM will be part of all stakeholder engagements.

The consultants will visit two districts to sample the current situation and changes since the development of the NTS. The proposed districts are Yumbe and Isingiro, final selection will be made in consultation with stakeholders.

Certain milestones, as laid out in the table below, are to be achieved during the contract term:

Milestones/partial works	**Date/location/responsibility**	**Criteria for acceptance**
Short and Concise brief on the Situational and Funding Landscape (including funding scenarios and transition status assessment)	2 weeks after contract signing	Approval by MoFPED/OPM
Draft Revised Budget and Financing Options - re-costed phased budget, affordability analysis, financing	4 weeks after contract signing	Approval by MoFPED/OPM

architecture options		
Endorsed Financing Framework	8 weeks after contract signing	Documentation of endorsement by Government and Donors
Updated draft NTS and annex volumes and sector roadmap updates, validated through stakeholder workshops	12 weeks after contract signing	Approval by MoFPED/OPM
Final NTS package that is ready to be submitted to top managment - final Strategy (max. 30 pages), annexes, presentation pack	15 weeks after contract signing	Approval by MoFPED / OPM

Period of assignment: from **01/01/2027** until **31/05/2027.**

3. Concept

In the tender, the tenderer is required to show *how* the objectives defined in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) are to be achieved, if applicable under consideration of further method-related requirements (technical-methodological concept).

Note: The numbers in parentheses correspond to the lines of the technical assessment grid.

The technical evaluation will be done jointly by GIZ, OPM and MoFPED. An online or physical engagement may take place prior to concluding the contracting process, in order to clarify open questions regarding the assignment and the technical concept.

Technical-methodological concept

Strategy (1.1): The tenderer is required to consider the tasks to be performed with reference to the objectives of the services put out to tender (see Chapter 1 Context) (1.1.1). Following this, the tenderer presents and justifies the explicit strategy with which it intends to provide the services for which it is responsible (see Chapter 2 Tasks to be performed) (1.1.2).

The tenderer is required to present the actors relevant for the services for which it is responsible and describe the **cooperation (1.2)** with them.

The tenderer is required to present and explain its approach to **steering** the measures with the project partners (1.3.1).

The tenderer is required to describe the key **processes** for the services for which it is responsible and create an **operational plan** or schedule (1.4.1) that describes how the services according to Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) are to be provided. In particular, the tenderer is required to describe the necessary work steps and, if applicable, take account of the milestones and **contributions** of other actors (partner contributions) in accordance with Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) (1.4.2).

4. Personnel concept

The tenderer is required to provide personnel who are suited to filling the positions described, on the basis of their CVs (see Chapter 7), the range of tasks involved and the required qualifications.

The below specified qualifications represent the requirements to reach the maximum number of points in the technical assessment.

Team leader

Tasks of the team leader

- Overall responsibility for the advisory packages of the contractor (quality and deadlines)
- In charge of the overall strategy writing
- Coordinating and ensuring communication with MoFPED, OPM, MWE, MoH, MoES, GIZ others involved in the project
- Personnel management, in particular identifying the need for short-term assignments within the available budget, as well as planning and steering assignments and supporting local and international short-term experts
- Regular reporting in accordance with deadlines

Qualifications of the team leader

- Education/training (2.1.1): university degree (Master) in Economics, Development Studies, Public Finance or related field
- Language (2.1.2): C2-level language proficiency in English
- General professional experience (2.1.3): 10 years of professional experience in sector the public, economic or governance sector
- Specific professional experience (2.1.4): 10 years of engagement in public financial management, development-related or governance issues, preferably in the refugee context, as well as demonstrated experience in drafting strategies for Government
- Leadership/management experience (2.1.5): 5 years of management/leadership experience as project team leader or manager in a company
- Regional experience (2.1.6): 5 years of experience in projects in EAC (region), of which 2 years in projects in Uganda

Short-term expert pool consisting of 2 members

For the technical assessment, an average of the qualifications of all specified members of the expert pool is calculated. Please send a CV for each pool member (see below Chapter 7 Requirements on the format of the bid) for the assessment. Ideally, the expert pool should include a public finance and costing specialist, as well as a data and policy analyst to compile the situational analysis for transition in the three sectors.

Tasks of the short-term expert pool

- Conducting the assignment outlined in the Terms of Reference (including conducting the rapid situational assessment, develop a realistic phased budget and sustainability strategy, support the proposal of financing mechanisms)
- Support to planning and design, data collection, analysis and strategy writing
- Division of responsibilities to be set by team leader and team

Qualifications of the short-term expert pool

- Education/training (2.6.1): 2 experts with university qualification (Master) in economics, public finance, development studies or related field
- Language (2.6.2): 2 experts with C2-level language proficiency in English
- General professional experience (2.6.3): 2 experts with 7 years of professional experience in the public, economic or governance sector
- Specific professional experience (2.6.4): 2 experts with 7 years of professional experience in sectoral planning (specifically WASH, Education and/or Health) and public financial management, as well as demonstrated experience in drafting and costing strategies
- Regional experience (2.6.5): 2 experts with 2 years of experience in EAC (region), preferably Uganda

The tenderer must provide a clear overview of all proposed short-term experts and their individual qualifications.

5. Costing requirements

Assignment of personnel and travel expenses.

Per diem allowances are reimbursed as a lump sum up to the maximum amounts permissible under tax law for each country as set out in the country table in the circular from the German Federal Ministry of Finance on travel expense remuneration (downloadable from the German Federal Ministry of Finance – tax treatment of travel expenses and allowances for international business travel as of 1 January 2026 (GERMAN ONLY)).

Accommodation allowances are reimbursed as detailed in the specification of inputs below.

With special justification, additional Accommodation costs up to a reasonable amount can be reimbursed against evidence.

All business travel must be agreed in advance by the officer responsible for the project

Specification of inputs

Fee days	**Number of experts**	**Number of days per expert**	**Total**	**Comments**
Designation of TL/key expert/short-term expert pool	1	23	23	
Designation short-term expert pool	2	28	56	
Travel expenses	**Quantity**	**Number per expert**	**Total**	**Comments**

Per-diem allowance in country of assignment	3	8	24	For travel to Yumbe (4 days per consultant, of which 2 travel days) and Isingiro (4 days per consultant, of which 2 travel days)
Overnight allowance in country of assignment	3	6	18	
Transport	**Quantity**	**Number per expert**	**Total**	**Comments**
Travel expenses car	1	1	1	Travel from Kampala to Yumbe and Isingiro by car
Other costs	**Number**	**Price**	**Total**	**Comments**

6. Inputs of GIZ or other actors

GIZ and/or other actors are expected to make the following available:

- Logistics for workshops: if any workshop is required, GIZ will make the necessary arrangements (e.g. hall hire, refreshments, materials etc.)
- Facilitation of stakeholder engagements and access to available data and information

7. Requirements on the format of the tender

The structure of the tender must correspond to the structure of the ToR. In particular, the detailed structure of the concept (Chapter 3) should be organised in accordance with the positively weighted criteria in the assessment grid (not with zero). The tender must be legible (font size 11 or larger) and clearly formulated. It must be drawn up in English.

The complete tender must not exceed 10 pages (excluding CVs). If one of the maximum page lengths is exceeded, the content appearing after the cut-off point will not be included in the assessment. External content (e.g. links to websites) will also not be considered.

The CVs of the personnel proposed in accordance with Chapter 4 of the ToRs must be submitted using the format specified in the terms and conditions for application. The CVs shall not exceed 4 pages each. They must clearly show the position and job the proposed person held in the reference project and for how long.

Please calculate your financial tender based exactly on the parameters specified in Chapter 5 Quantitative requirements. The contractor is not contractually entitled to use up the days, trips, workshops or budgets in full. The number of days, trips and workshops and the budgets will be contractually agreed as maximum limits. The specifications for pricing are defined in the price schedule.

8. Annexes

- Draft National Transition Strategy (March 2025) and Roadmaps for the Health, Education and Water Sector