

University Grants Commission
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

Higher Education Reforms Project (HERP)
(2015-2020)

Terms of Reference (TOR) for conducting
Beneficiary Satisfaction Surveys

1. Background

The higher education in Nepal did not see systematic reform until two decades ago. The first serious effort to improve the quality and access to higher education was made by the First Higher Education Project (1994-2001). This project brought changes in the higher education curriculum structure, supported infrastructure development and academic/professional development, equipped the laboratories and faculties, provided basic orientations in line with the reform activities, and strengthened management reform process for decentralized and participatory system in Tribhuvan University. Six years later, the Second Higher Education Project (SHEP, 2007-2014) was launched with two broad aims, (i) to enhance quality and relevance of higher education and research through a set of incentives for promoting effective management and financial sustainability of academic institutions, and, (ii) to improve access for academically qualified under-privileged students, including girls, Dalits and educationally disadvantaged Janajati to higher education through the financial assistance and enhanced capacity of higher secondary schools. The project was successfully implemented and it brought several improvements in higher education, most notably, an increase in the enrollment of students from underprivileged groups, an increase in the enrollment in employment/economy focused programs, an increase in pass rate in Masters level, strengthening of research infrastructure and activities, introduction of new programs, an increase in the number of autonomous campuses, initiation of publishing of academic calendar, introduction of quality assurance and accreditation system, strengthening of education management and information system and strengthening of Tribhuvan University Central Library. No formal satisfaction survey was conducted during the project. However, indirect indication of mixed level of satisfaction among institutions, faculties and students over reform programs and the outcomes were observed in formal and informal interactions.

Drawing on the experience, expectations and the lessons learned from the SHEP, Higher Education Reforms Project (HERP, 2014-2020) was launched in 2015. This one is a results based financing (RBL). University Grants Commission (UGC), Student Financial Assistance Fund Development Board (SFAFDB) and Tribhuvan University (TU) are implementing agencies with specific responsibilities. The project has two major components: 1. Implementation of Reforms; and, 2. Capacity Building and Project Management. The reforms component has seven specific performance indicators which are as follows:

- (i) Establishment of National Accreditation system
- (ii) Performance based financing to higher education institutions (HEIs)
- (iii) Extension of Autonomy to additional campuses/schools

- (iv) Examination reforms and enforcement of academic calendar in TU
- (v) Revision of existing programs and introduction of new programs
- (vi) Poverty targeted financial support for under-privileged students
- (vii) Institutions supported for academic excellence in priority areas through research, development and innovation (RDI) awards

The UGC and TU have developed a comprehensive monitoring program and format, to provide information on program performance at national and institutional levels. The key performance indicators of the HERP are part of this format. In addition, beneficiary satisfaction surveys are provisioned to be conducted at three different stages of the project to measure track changes in satisfaction of the stakeholders over time and to identify needs and areas for improving overall satisfaction. The proposed satisfaction survey for higher education will assess satisfaction level of the direct beneficiaries, namely, students and faculty members in terms of quality of education, teaching and research environment and facilities, and the employers in terms of their perception of the quality of graduates during HERP intervention.

A Consulting Firm with track record on undertaking the similar survey will be hired to conduct the satisfaction survey as per the needs and conditions of UGC, targeting students, faculties and employers. The hired firm will have to conduct three surveys at three stages of the project – a baseline survey in year one, a midline survey in year three, and an end-line survey in year five.

2. Objectives, Scope, Coverage and Deliverables

2.1 Objectives

Major objectives of the proposed surveys are: (i) to measure the satisfaction level of beneficiaries (students, faculties and employers); (ii) to track changes over time in satisfaction of beneficiaries; and (iii) to identify needs and areas for improving overall satisfaction of the beneficiaries.

Detailed research questions will be elaborated jointly by UGC and the Consultant during the preparation of inception report and data collection tools.

2.2 Scope

The Consulting Firm will have to conduct three surveys, a base line survey in 2016 and a midline survey in 2018 and the endline survey in 2020. Each survey will involve three different surveys involving students, faculty and employers.

There are nine eligible universities, four deemed universities (Medical Academies) and 1,276 campuses in Nepal (EMIS data, 2012-13). The campuses are of three categories - constituent, community and private. Constituent and community campuses are primary beneficiaries of the Higher Education Reforms Project (2014-2020). Beneficiary institutions are expected to be at various statuses and stages of being benefited by reform programs, which include accreditation, autonomy, performance based financing, various reform grants and research grants. Sample should be drawn from all categories of primary beneficiary HEIs in weighted manner and also to cover the possible impact of reform interventions in higher education institutions in Nepal. The survey will be done using a specified questionnaire for each target group and focus group discussion (FGD).

Targeted beneficiary groups:

- (i) Students: (a) Bachelor level students (appropriately sampled including first, second or third and the final year), and (b) Postgraduate students (Masters level)
- (ii) Faculty members
- (iii) Employers: Government and non-government agencies, companies, firms, NGOs and commercial banks, academic institutions (schools, campuses and training centers), industries, and informal sector.

2.3 Coverage

A. Coverage of Student Satisfaction Survey (undergraduate and post graduate)

The survey should cover, among others, the following areas:

1. Admission management, including entrance examinations if applicable, and orientation upon management
2. Adherence to academic calendar
3. Regularity of instructional activities
4. Student centered pedagogical practices
5. Learning environment in classrooms, library, ICT facilities, instructional materials, field work and others including quality of teachers, teaching facilities and equipment
6. Curriculum (relevance, flexibility)
7. Remedial instruction, monitoring of student progress
8. Research (motivation, mentoring, infrastructure, availability of fund and qualified mentor)
9. Assessment system – classroom and final examinations
10. Student financial assistance
11. Student counseling and placement
12. Physical facilities, including buildings, drinking water, toilets and outdoor facilities
13. Extracurricular activities including, sports, lectures, conferences, symposiums
14. College/University Leadership and governing body
15. Overall on campus disciplines of students, teachers and staff
16. Responsiveness and fairness of the management of departments, campus administration
17. Transparency and accountability
18. Academic integrity of examination and research
19. Training/mentoring about academic integrity, research ethics and safety issues
20. Grievance redressal and feedback system
21. Participation in extension and outreach activities
22. Education Management Information System (EMIS)
23. Political activities

B. Coverage of Student Satisfaction Survey for post graduate students (in addition to that for undergraduate students)

The survey should cover, among others, the following areas:

1. Access to journals and publication for research
2. Availability and adequacy of research fund
3. Quality of research guides
4. Academic integrity and rigor of research
5. Facilities for research
6. Opportunity for academic and research collaboration
7. Monitoring of academic progress

C. Coverage of Faculty Satisfaction Survey

The survey should cover, among others, the following areas:

1. Recruitment and promotion: criteria and procedures and fairness
2. Academic calendar
3. Appointment to managerial positions such as head of department, assistant campus chief and campus chief
4. Career development opportunities
5. Access to research funding, conferences, symposiums
6. Teacher mentoring
7. Faculty performance monitoring by management
8. Office space
9. Physical facilities, including buildings, drinking water, toilets and outdoor facilities
10. Enforcement of academic calendar and academic rules
11. Regularity of instructional activities
12. Admission management, including entrance examinations if applicable, and student orientation upon management
13. Learning environment in classrooms, library, ICT facilities, instructional materials, field work and others including quality of students and equipment
14. Relevance of curriculum, curriculum revision and new programs
15. Key stakeholders participation in curriculum design
16. Responsiveness and fairness of the management of departments, campus administration
17. Remedial instruction, monitoring of student progress
18. Assessment system – classroom and final examinations
19. Student pass rates
20. Overall on campus disciplines of students, teachers and staff
21. Student counseling and placement
22. Student activities – students' union, clubs and partisan political activities
23. Attitude of students towards studies
24. Transparency and accountability
25. Academic integrity
26. Quality of campus/department leadership
27. Clarity of vision, mission and goal of the campus
28. Campus development trend
29. Maintenance of physical facilities
30. Resource generation, financing
31. Quality assurance and accreditation
32. Performance-based grants
33. Autonomy - Campus autonomy and autonomy of the faculty member in various academic aspects
34. Competition with national and international universities
35. Community services
36. Political activities

D. Coverage of Employer Satisfaction Survey

The survey should cover, among others, the following areas:

1. Communication skills – verbal and written
2. Interpersonal skills
3. Leadership skills
4. Team work
5. Attitude, respect for diversity

6. Moral and ethical character, discipline
7. Commitment, honesty and determination
8. Taking Initiative
9. Thinking out of the box, creativity, research inclination
10. IT skills
11. Ability to learn and adapt
12. General knowledge
13. Competence in subject matter: theoretical and practical aspects
14. Performance on the job
15. Comparison with foreign graduates
16. Participation in curriculum design/revision (may be revision of elective subjects)
17. Campus-industry linkage related activities

2.4 Deliverables

The complete assignment for the Consulting Firm will include the following tasks:

Task	Details
Inception Report	Report including study methodology, survey details such as sampling methods, calendar for the field survey, data entry and reports, arrangements made for supervision and validation of data collected, data entry related tasks, and report writing. Also include strategies for enumeration and FGDs.
Sampling	Selection of representative samples from each of the groups described. Appropriate sampling weights must be provided.
Questionnaire design	Separate questionnaire for each of the groups. Both English and Nepali versions of the questionnaires will be prepared.
Pilot survey	Pilot survey to test questionnaires. The results of pilot survey should be shared.
Field Survey	Including training of enumerators and fielding of the main survey.
Data entry	Preparation of data entry software, data entry and management, and data cleanup. Clean and usable data to be provided in Excel and STATA formats.
Report writing	Report according to structure agreed with UGC. Draft and Final report based on comments received

3. Sampling methodology and size

The following are, but not limited to, general criteria:

- (i) All types of primary beneficiary category HEIs in Nepal must be represented in weighted manner.
- (ii) Tribhuvan University, being a mega-university in comparison to other universities and deemed universities, must be represented in an appropriately weighted way.
- (iii) Having a heterogeneous nature of target groups and non-uniform commencement and implementation of earlier reform interventions, care must be applied to design the survey to distinguish the control and intervention groups and possible subgroups within intervention groups, for example, general and technical categories.

- (iv) A subset of sample must be assigned for longitudinal analysis across the surveys at all three stages.
- (v) For the control sample, both the sample not receiving reform intervention so far and the sample representing initial stage of current intervention of HERP (for example, first year student) should be used.
- (vi) Each survey must have statistically significant samples.

4. Survey Instruments

UGC will provide the reports of SHEP, informational documents related to HERP and all available Education Management and Information System (EMIS) documents to the consultant and the consultant is required to design the survey based on these documents. It will be the consultant's responsibility to prepare the initial draft questionnaires and FGD and revise it based on the suggestions from the UGC on them.

Specific questionnaires should be used for all target groups. In addition to questionnaire, FGD should also be arranged for postgraduate students, faculty members and employers. All the survey instruments should be finalized jointly by the UGC, the World Bank and the Consultant.

A schedule has to be prepared by the Consultant to start with the survey activities in consultation with relevant departments of relevant universities. UGC will provide letters and documents to facilitate the contact and survey.

5. Survey Locations

- (i) Student surveys should be done in the class rooms of the sample department.
- (ii) FGD for Faculty members from each sampled campus/department should be arranged separately.
- (iii) Both mixed and separate FGD should be arranged for Government and Private employers' representatives.
- (iv) Any FGD session will have a limit of 12 persons.
- (v) FGD and questionnaire filling should not overlap so that participants of FGD are not distracted.

6. Responsibilities of UGC

UGC will:

- (i) Oversee the whole survey process;
- (ii) Make suggestions on technical aspects and issues;
- (iii) Participate in finalization of the sample;
- (iv) Write letter to the university and departmental head and assist the enumerators to get enough cooperation from the institutions; and
- (v) Suggest way out in unforeseeable condition experienced by the consultant.

7. Reporting

The consultant will report to the Member-Secretary of UGC/ Coordinator of HERP. The Consultant's work will be supervised by the Technical Advisor/Research Director of UGC.

8. Required Qualification of the Consultant

- (i) The Consultant should have at least 5 years' experience and track records on conducting the similar survey.
- (ii) The Consultant should have experience in designing, developing and implementing at least five large surveys.
- (iii) The Consultant should have minimum two years of experience in designing, developing and implementing surveys in educational institutions including universities, public and private agencies and employers' associations.
- (iv) The Consultant should have past experience of conducting FGD Survey.
- (vi) The consultant should have the capacity to mobilize resources nationally (experience of conducting survey in at least 25 districts covering all five development regions and three ecological belts).
- (v) In case of public or public autonomous or part of a public autonomous institution, proof of legal provisions for carrying out such external surveys and studies needs to be submitted.
- (vii) The Consultant has to propose a team of professional researchers and provide proof of availability of key professionals (CVs with signature & date and their confirmation letter) and availability of resources (liquidity, hardware, software and logistics) for conducting such surveys.

9. Consultant staffing (proposed)

	Role	Main Tasks	Minimum qualification and professional experience desired	Expected input from individual experts		
				Baseline	Midline	Endline
1	Team Leader/ Senior Researcher	Lead, manage, and supervise the works of the consultant team; coordinate with UGC; conduct data analysis and write reports; be ultimately responsible for the consultant's deliverables and quality assurance	PhD in social science; having an experience of leading large-scale surveys; having at least 5 years of experience in heading research projects and overall experience of 10 years.			
2	Researchers (2 to 3 staff)	Carry out research works; train and supervise surveyors and data entry staff;	Master's degree or PhD with minimum 5 years of research experience in the relevant field.			

		ensure the quality of data collection				
3	Surveyors/ Moderators	Carry out data collection	Master's degree with an experience of conducting surveys and data collection			
4	Data Entry Staff	Data entry				
5	Assistants					

10. Duration of the Assignment

Each survey (baseline, midline and endline) should take around 4 months. Two months for preparation and Field Survey, one month for Data Entry and one month for Report Writing. The time lines of the survey activities are as follows:

Duration of assignments for three phases of satisfaction survey is expected as below:

Table: Duration of Assignment for three phases of Satisfaction survey

Assignment	Duration
Baseline	February – June 2016
Midline	February – June 2018
Endline	February –June 2020

11. Mode of Payment

The Contract will be on the Lump-sum basis. The payment will be made on four installments for each survey:

No. of Installments	Percentage of contract price	Tentative Timeline for the Baseline Survey	Milestone
Installment 1	10 % of the contract amount	January 20, 2016	Signing of contract
Installment 2	20 % of the contract amount	February10, 2016	Submission of Inception Report acceptable to UGC
Installment 3	50 % of the contract amount	May 30, 2016	Submission of Draft Report acceptable to UGC
Installment 4	20 % of the contract amount	June 30, 2016	Submission of Final Report acceptable to UGC.

12. Ownership of the Data, Documents, and Equipment

- (i) UGC shall be the owner of all the data collected, data sets, reports, documents, etc. prepared by the consultant.
- (ii) All the documents collected must be handed over to UGC before final payment.
- (iii) All documents, reports and information from this assignment will be regarded as UGC's property, so the mentioned outputs or part of it cannot be sold or used in any case without the prior permission of UGC.

13. Procedure for Selection of Consultant for Baseline Satisfaction Survey

A Consultant for Baseline Survey will be selected in accordance with Consultants Qualification Selection (CQS) as prescribed in the World Bank's procurement procedure. UGC will invite Expression of Interest (EOI) for the consulting service from the interested firms and the submitted EOIs will be evaluated using the criteria illustrated below. The subsequent procedure for selection and invitation of technical and financial proposal will be in accordance with CQS as prescribed in the World Bank's procurement procedure.

Ranking Criteria for EOIs (Full Marks 100)

	Criteria, sub-criteria	Weight and Marking scheme	Score
1	Firm's Core Business (20)		
	Firm's turnover in the education sector as a share of total turnover for last five years	<u>Maximum Marks = 10</u> Over 50% = 10; over 40% = 8; over 30% = 6; over 20% = 4; over 10% = 2; below 10% = 0	
	(b) Number of years in continuous service*	<u>Maximum marks = 10</u> Less than 5 years = 0; 5 years = 1; 5+ years = 1 + 1 per additional year	
2	Qualification of Firm in the Field of Assignment (45)		
	(a) Number of relevant surveys** completed	<u>Maximum marks = 15</u> Less than 2 surveys = 0; 2 surveys = 1; 2+ surveys = 1 + 2 per additional survey	
	(b) Quality of a survey report [included in (a) above] completed by the consultant	<u>Maximum marks = 10</u> Quality of presentation: 3; Analytical rigor: 4; Responsiveness to TOR: 3	
	(c) Number of other surveys conducted	<u>Maximum marks = 10</u> Less than 3 surveys = 0; 2 surveys = 1; 2+ surveys = 1 + 1 per additional survey	
	(d) Quality of a survey report	<u>Maximum marks = 10</u>	

	completed by the consultant [other than that included in (b)]	Quality of presentation: 3 (3 for excellent, 2 for good, 1 for satisfactory); Analytical rigor: 4 (4 for excellent, 2-3 for good, 1 for satisfactory); Responsiveness to TOR: 3 (3 for exceeding, 2 for full, 1 for satisfactory)	
3	Technical and Managerial Capabilities of the Firm (25)		
	(a) Qualification of the full time Chief Executive of the firm	<u>Maximum marks = 10</u> PhD degree in relevant discipline*** = 3; PhD in other discipline = 2; Master degree = 1; Professional service = 0.5 per year of service after graduation.	
	(b) Authenticated documents outlining policies and procedures for quality assurance of the firm with dates of adoption	<u>Maximum marks = 5</u> No documents available = 0; Relative quality of document = 4-5 for excellent, 2-3 for good, 1 for satisfactory (relative scale based on the comparison of the submissions by all applicants)	
	(c) Number of full time technical staff in the relevant field	<u>Maximum marks = 5</u> 1 per staff available	
	(d) Number of full time key technical staff in addition to (c) above	<u>Maximum marks = 5</u> 0.5 per staff available	
4	General Qualification of Key Full Time Staff	<u>Maximum marks = 10</u> PhD degree in relevant discipline*** = 3; PhD in other discipline = 2; Masters degree = 1; Number of relevant surveys led = 2 per survey; Number of other surveys led = 1 per survey	

* Continuous service is the latest period of service without interruption of more than a year in between.

** Satisfaction surveys and any surveys in education sector, schools/campuses, teachers, students and employers shall be regarded as relevant surveys for the purpose of the current assignment.

*** Education, social sciences, economics, management and related disciplines shall be regarded as relevant discipline for the purpose of the current assignment.