



Terms of Reference: Technical Partner organisation/ consultant to support Undergraduate Medical Education at Free Aleppo University in Northwest Syria.

1. BACKGROUND

Who THET are?

One billion people will never see a qualified health worker in their lives. For over thirty years, THET – www.thet.org - has been working to change this, training health workers to build a world where everyone has access to affordable and quality healthcare. We do this by leveraging the expertise and energy of the UK health community, supporting health partnerships between hospitals, colleges and clinics in the UK and those overseas.

From reducing maternal deaths in Uganda to improving the quality of hospital care for injured children in Myanmar, we work to strengthen local health systems and build a healthier future for all. In the past seven years alone, THET has reached over 84,000 health workers across 31 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia in partnership with over 130 UK institutions and UK health workers who have contributed over 60,000 days of their time as volunteers. The programme has contributed to more effective and efficient health systems in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

THET's work is rooted in the Health Partnership Model. Health partnerships are long-term, institutional relationships between health organisations in the UK (or elsewhere) and their counterparts in LMICs, and are based on ideas of co-development, reciprocal learning, and mutual benefit. Partners work together to develop and carry out health systems strengthening activities in response to locally identified priorities, be that training, curriculum development, leadership, and governance, etc.

Introduction to the MAWARID —*Mapping and scoping Assistance to health care workers and human Resources for health Including the Design of future support to core quality assurance, education, and representative functions for the medical profession Programme.*

THET is responding to a request from the EU to assist with the strengthening of medical education priorities in Northwest Syria (NWS), working with and responding to the priorities of the Medical Education entities on levels of Undergraduate and Postgraduate, and reflecting on systems already in place in other parts of Syria.

The project is further articulated around four result areas:

- i. Strengthened HRH/HSS leadership and governance of selected parameter-compliant actors possibly including the Syrian Board of Medical Specialities (SBOMS), Medical Syndicates, Leagues and/or Associations.
- ii. Improved delivery of postgraduate medical education with a focus on shortage specialities (through areas such as curriculum reform, improved clinical skills teaching and modern teaching approaches competency-based assessment procedures, placements, resources and tools and/or application of learning technologies, based on scoping findings);

- iii. Improved understanding of and recommendations for the strengthening of undergraduate medical education; and
- iv. Improved understanding of health workforce capacity gaps and needs through a detailed scoping assessment, dialogue and engagement of key local stakeholders to identify problems and test solutions.

2. Improved understanding of and recommendations for the strengthening of undergraduate medical education at Free Aleppo University in Northwest Syria:

The area of NWS is a non-state area where there is no linkage with the central government in Damascus, and there are many authorities. The health community was able to develop an approach to maintain the health system to meet the minimum standards of the health system blocks, including better service provision to the patients. The majority of the health facilities in the area are managed and operated by local and international NGOs in cooperation with the local health authorities. On the other hand, there were no medicine school graduating doctors to address the increasing needs in this field. In 2015, a group of academicians founded the Free Aleppo University and in 2016, the Faculty of Medicine was established as part of FAU. It started to enrol the medicine students who were studying in the universities in the government area and couldn't complete their studies there because of the war situations. After that, a new batch of students were admitted and by 2022 the first batch had been graduated. The faculty of medicine started with very few academic doctors and many professional doctors voluntarily who tried to build their capacity in the field of teaching methods by themselves. More details about FAU can be found in this [link](#).

As part of the MAWARID project, and under the third results aforementioned in the 1st section above, we aim to conduct a deep assessment of undergraduate medical education delivered by the Free Aleppo University "FAU", defining the baseline of the current capacity of teachers including teaching methodologies and assessments approaches, reviewing the curricula and defining the needs to develop them, reviewing policies and procedures in use, and accordingly recommending an action plan for development in the next phase of the programme.

Due to access issues in NW Syria, this will be provided remotely with a few scheduled meetings and reflection sessions to be conducted in Southern Turkey if possible. Any future travel to NW Syria, if possible, would need to be discussed and agreed with THET.

3. Responsibilities

1. Identify/agree on standards for medical education; depending on what is already in place, the World Federation of Medical Education standards could be one framework to start from, but this would be based on the priorities of and in agreement with the Syrian stakeholders.
2. Work with FAU to undertake an assessment of the current provision of medical education at FAU (based on the agreed standards), likely including
 - Review of the curriculum in use at Free Aleppo University, teaching approaches and its suitability to the NW Syrian context
 - Overview of available faculty, including number, breadth of clinical areas and teaching approaches,



- Analysis of available teaching spaces and resources (including clinical placements).
 - Review of student intakes, including entry requirements, pass rates and satisfaction with the course.
 - Overview of policies and procedures, as well as regulation and accreditation needs.
3. Based on the assessment, agree a road map with FAU to address the priorities identified.

4. Deliverables:

- Contextually consistent Medical Education standards for undergraduate medical education at Free Aleppo University agreed.
- Assessment tools for undergraduate medical education at Free Aleppo University that cover all aspects clarified in the responsibilities section above.
- Assessment report for undergraduate medical education at Free Aleppo University highlighting a robust analysis of the that covers all aspects clarified in the responsibilities section above.
- Action plan that includes recommendations for developing undergraduate medical education in Free Aleppo University “FAU” based on the assessment report.

5. Requirements:

- THET is now aiming to form a partnership between FAU and a medical school team that includes:
 - Technical consultants and medical educators with experience in assessing and strengthening medical education, including in similar contexts to Northwest Syria.
 - Experience working in partnership with others to promote capacity building.
 - Arabic language is an advantage.

Terms and conditions

This consultancy runs from September – December 2023

Whilst this ToR is for an initial assessment phase, pending the success of this phase and confirmation of future funding, we would like to see this partnership developing into the next phase of the programme to deliver the agreed action plan.

Up to €50,000.00 is available for the delivery of this work, which will include all costs including salaries, travel and any costs associated with delivering training activities.

An Expression of Interest detailing your suitability for the position and how you would deliver the requirements of this Terms of Reference, including budget requirements, is to be submitted to Jessica Fraser at jessica.fraser@thet.org, ideally no later than September 22nd, 2023. Submissions will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

For further information or to discuss the consultancy, please contact Ahmed Mbayed at ahmed.mbayed@thet.org or Jessica Fraser at jessica.fraser@thet.org