

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy to Prepare an Inception Report for the Government Machinery Review

1. Background

The Government of the Republic of Vanuatu, through the Office of the Prime Minister, is considering the implementation of an independent and comprehensive review of the entire Government Machinery. At its Meeting No. 11 of 2025, held on 5 June 2025, the Council of Ministers deliberated on the proposal for an independent review and approved its conduct within a period not exceeding twelve (12) months. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the structures, systems, and functions of ministries, departments, and agencies operate more effectively and efficiently, and are fully aligned with national development priorities.

The Government has realised that services are not reaching the people on the ground as much as it hoped, despite increasing the yearly budget for all its institutions. More broadly, the Government is also committed to good governance, transparency, and accountability. Collective and coordinated actions are necessary to implement these broad government policies fully. It is imperative that the Government review not only the allocation of portfolios and the interconnected structural processes of each institution, but also the strengths and capacities of its institutions, and ensure that they perform their roles and responsibilities as prescribed by law.

The Whole of Government Machinery Review will be a significant achievement for Vanuatu, as it will guide the Government in addressing issues that affect the performance of its institutions. The objective is to provide clear direction to the Government on the reforms needed to ensure that its institutions and machinery have the capacity and scope required. The review will be supported by an Implementation Plan, which will outline essential steps in the process, priorities, timelines, deadlines, and budget estimates to implement the reform.

This comprehensive review will be designed to systematically identify overlaps, gaps, and inefficiencies, and to highlight opportunities for institutional strengthening, with the objective of improving service delivery, ensuring accountability, enhancing public expenditure management, promoting policy coherence, planning, and fostering alignment across institutions and policies.

2. Scoping Exercise

Given the scope, ambiguity, and complexity of the MOG review, the government deemed it necessary to conduct an initial scoping exercise to inform the Inception Report and guide the design of the independent MOG Review.

The Governance for Growth (GfG) has agreed to support the process by funding the engagement of a qualified Consultant to prepare an Inception Report, which will guide the conduct of the full Government Machinery Review, ensuring the eventual MoG Review is politically grounded, contextually relevant, and technically feasible. The Consultant responsible for the development of the Inception Report will be supported by a technical team. The technical team will come from various backgrounds, including legal, finance and policy development and guidance.

Thus, the purpose of this consultancy is to prepare an Inception Report that outlines a clear understanding of the assignment, key issues to be reviewed, proposed methodology, data collection and analytical approach, stakeholder engagement plan, communication strategy, work schedule, and required resources for the full review of the Government Machinery.

The Inception Report will serve as the foundational planning document (a scoping analysis) for approval by the Government and development partner before the full review commences.

3. Scope of Work

The Consultant will be required to:

1. Define and conduct problem analysis to determine key issues needing MoG change
2. Review past MoG reviews, existing documentation on public sector reforms, institutional frameworks, and relevant legislation frameworks.
3. Hold initial consultations with key government institutions and the donor partners to clarify expectations and scope.
4. Define the objectives, questions, and analytical framework for the review of government machinery.
5. Develop governance model of the comprehensive review to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective coordination (Advisory panels, secretariat, chairing options)
6. Develop and propose a detailed methodology, including data sources, analysis methods, and consultation approaches.
7. Identify potential challenges, risks, and mitigation measures.
8. Prepare a detailed work plan and schedule for the full review phase.
9. Draft necessary COM submissions, such as the submission for the Inception Report
10. Draft TORs for Technical Group and others where needed
11. Produce the Inception Report summarizing the above elements for presentation and endorsement.

4. Expected Deliverables

- **Inception Report** (maximum 25–30 pages) should include:
 1. Problem definition/intent statement

2. Understanding of the assignment and context
 3. Refined objectives and scope
 4. Methodology and analytical framework
 5. Stakeholder consultation plan
 6. Detailed work plan and timeline
 7. Risks and mitigation strategies
 8. Resource and logistics requirements
 9. TORs for advisory panels and secretariat
- **Presentation** of the Inception Report to the Government Steering Committee and donor partners for validation. The Government Steering Committee will be the Central Agencies Committee (CAC).

5. Duration and Reporting

The consultancy is expected to take **4-8 weeks** from commencement date.

6. Reporting Arrangement

The Consultant will report to the Chairperson of the Central Agency Committee, DG-PMO, through the Director-DSPPAC as department responsible for oversight.

The Consultant will provide fortnightly progress reports.

7. Qualifications and Experience

The Consultant should possess:

- Advanced degree in Public Administration, Governance, Institutional Reform, or related field.
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in public sector reform, institutional assessment, or governance advisory.
- Demonstrated experience in conducting government machinery or organizational reviews in the Pacific and understanding of the Vanuatu context.
- Excellent analytical, writing, and communication skills.
- Proven record of producing Cabinet-or COM-level reform documentation

8. Payment and Deliverables Schedule

Payment will be made upon signing of the contract and on satisfactory completion and acceptance of the **Inception Report**, and its presentation to the Steering Committee. The total consultancy fee will be negotiated between the Government and the development partner.

9. Confidentiality

All information accessed during the assignment shall remain the property of the Government of Vanuatu and shall not be disclosed without prior written authorization.

10. Submission of Proposals

Interested consultants should submit expressions of interest (EoI):

- A brief technical proposal outlining understanding of the assignment and proposed approach;
- Updated CV; and
- Financial proposal (professional fees, travel, and related costs).

Submissions should be sent to the Office of the Prime Minister, addressed to the Chair, Central Agency Committee, before 22 December 2025 at 5:00pm.