



Call for External Reviewers

Terms of Reference

March 2024



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Abbreviations/Acronyms

FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
HVT	High Volume Transport
LMICs	Low- and Middle -Income countries
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PMU	Programme Management Unit
ToC	Theory of Change



1. Programme Background

The [High Volume Transport Applied Research Programme \(HVT\)](#) funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) is part of the United Kingdom's response to addressing the global challenge of: "How can we help improve life for people living in low- and middle- income countries (LMICs) by developing better transport systems, while improving it for everyone by reducing the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission burden and making transport more inclusive?" The main beneficiaries of the programme are the LMICs of Africa and South Asia.

The seven-year programme (2017-2025) has been producing a body of new research relevant to Africa and South Asia. By March 2024, a total of 71 HVT research projects had been completed and a further 22 projects were ongoing.

The research has helped policymakers and practitioners make investment decisions that support high-volume road and rail transport to become greener, more accessible, more affordable, more inclusive, and safer.

The HVT programme has also updated vital transport research that will provide solutions to help to reduce poverty and develop economies. New primary research has been conducted with an emphasis on climate change (mitigation and adaptation) and inclusive transport (transport for persons with disabilities, vulnerable groups, the aged and the young, road safety and gender-neutral transport). The research approach has been interdisciplinary. There are three priority research areas in two domains of land transport.

Common research thematic areas are:

- Policy and regulation including engineering
- Technology and innovation
- Decision support systems and data.
- Climate resilience and sustainability
- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

The two land transport domains are:

- Long distance strategic road and rail transport
- Urban transport (including non-motorised and low carbon transport)

About HVT

This applied research programme in high volume transport (HVT) where "high volume transport" means strategic road and rail networks for both passengers and freight, focuses on national and regional transport corridors and roads within cities in low-income countries (LICs). It was initially designed as a five year (later extended to seven years), two-part programme.

The first phase involved a review of the literature and evidence available and delivered a series of state-of-knowledge papers on the following themes: (i) long distance strategic road and rail transport (ii) urban transport; (iii) low carbon transport; and (iv) gender, vulnerable groups, and inclusion in high volume transport.

The second phase focussed on developing each of these themes further, such that technical and engineering research that could help improve high volume transport planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operation for both road and rail transport. In addition, research was supported to better understand the constraints and needs of women, and those with disabilities to better access transport services in the global south.

More information on the scope of the programme is available [here](#) and find the business case [here](#).



2. Review Objective

Purpose

The review will assess the extent to which HVT is achieving its intended objectives and identify areas for improvement. It will document key data related to the programme performance and help inform future programming to maximise the effect of applied transport research in Africa and Asia. The external reviewer will be expected to comply with the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria, as well as undertake a form of contribution analysis to review the evidence generated through of several years of implementation of the programme.

Objectives

- I. In light of the results achieved so far, assess the relevance of the pathways of change and assumptions, as described in the Theory of Change of HVT, looking at outcome level but also exploring unintended outcomes, positive and negative.
- II. Develop a narrative of the results accrued under this programme, identify, and better understand why some aspects may not have worked as intended and where success has led to positive change.
- III. Identify lessons learned and good practices experienced by stakeholders and partners.

The following questions should be considered as part of the review.

Relevance

1. To what extent was the design of the programme appropriate and relevant given the political, economic, and social context in the various countries of implementation, respective government's policy framework and the external development partners' development assistance strategies?

Effectiveness

2. Is the HVT programme achieving its objectives? How is it delivering against its theory of change, logframe outputs/outcomes? Are the key performance indicators (KPIs) the most relevant?
3. How effectively has HVT programme research contributed to improved developing improved policy and planning frameworks, technical solutions, stakeholders' engagement, capacity building; and how has it ensured research uptake?
4. To what extent is the HVT programme contributing to innovation and transformative change to bring about more accessible, affordable and climate friendly transport in the LMICs?
5. What has been achieved by HVT research on inclusive, safer, and more responsible transport?
6. How has the programme addressed gender equality and social inclusion issues in the transport sector?

Efficiency

7. Considering the activities, costs and time frames of the HVT programme, was programme implementation adequately organised and operationalised to achieve the intended results?
8. How well is the HVT programme providing Value for Money (VfM)?

Impact and sustainability

9. Is the intervention leading to other changes, including "scalable" or other projects gaining traction" solutions, and supporting and enabling southern leadership in transport research and innovation activities?
10. Has the intervention caused significant policy achievements affecting the lives of the intended beneficiaries?



3. Scope of Work

Deliverables and key activities

1. In-person kick-off meeting
2. Inception report and workplan
3. Consultations and workshops and with a cohort of stakeholders and suppliers
4. Draft and final review report
5. Presentation and PPT summarising final report to HVT team and FCDO

Please note that the consultant is expected to collaborate with a transport expert, separately subcontracted by HVT, who will support, and guide work where needed.

- **Task 1 - Agree scope, objectives and outputs of the review.** The consultant will work with the HVT team to confirm and agree objectives, scope and a workplan for the consultancy, and will confirm in the form of minutes from the meeting in week one.
- **Task 2 - Briefing.** Full briefing for the consultant and identification of key review questions (RQs) and HVT expectations for the review. Task 1 and task 2 are due to be completed on the day of meeting with the HVT team (online). The consultant will provide a brief inception report indicating the proposed approach, methodology and the sample of projects selected for review.
- **Task 3 - Programme Review.** HVT will share key documents on plans and activities completed, in addition to the information contained in the link above in section 1, and key staff members will join a progress discussion. Relevant documents will include business case, work plan, FCDO annual review, logframe, theory of change (ToC), mapping of log frame and ToC linkages and key publications. The published reports of HVT research activities are available at <https://transport-links.com/publications>. The review should include data from interviews (minimum 20 partners), surveys, and other consultation approaches.
- **Task 4 - Ad-hoc follow up discussions.** It will be useful to allow for possible ad-hoc discussions to be mutually agreed between the consultant and the HVT management team, with attendees and timing to be agreed. Such discussions can assist in clarifying and confirming ideas emerging from the review and drawing attention to aspects to consider in future programming of research activities.
- **Task 5 - Human success story addressing climate change and transport.** The consultant will identify a human success story of this kind from among the research activities undertaken by HVT and use this as the basis for preparing a contribution case study of HVT's output results leading to outcomes and impact results at sector level in terms of climate adaptation and/or mitigation (specific topic to be agreed). Contribution analysis to be used to capture outcome changes. Key results and recommendations arising to be included in the final report.
- **Task 6 - Final report.** The final report will be drafted for review by the HVT team and FCDO. It will include the ToC and logframe analysis and its validation, denoting the value of the programme to the sector (including comparison to other, similar programmes), and will centre around answering the review questions (RQs). It should also address the recommendations in the report of the ToC-logframe mapping done by the HVT team. This final report should also highlight learnings, risks and actionable recommendations for development of future programming, including priorities, with a focus on maximising HVT's outcomes and impacts. It must include (but not be limited to) the following findings:
 - Stakeholder consultation
 - HVT value for money analysis
 - Gender Equality and Social Inclusion recommendations for future programming.

The consultant will allow for at least one round of comments, consolidated by HVT, as this includes FCDO feedback before approval and the end of the assignment.



4. Methodology

As indicated in the objectives, review questions should follow the OECD DAC evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. While we would seek to highlight areas which have worked well, been effective and delivered impact, we are also interested in better understanding what has not worked well and the reasons why, or what could have been improved.

The review methodology is expected to use a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, to be outlined in the proposal, and be fully defined and approved as part of the inception report. The review should involve interviews with HVT stakeholders, funders, technical parties and governmental stakeholders. It is encouraged to include in your proposal the following elements:

- Tentative workplan
- Desk review of key programme documents, including datasets to perform a review of existing programmatic evidence, including logframe and KPI review
- Development of tools: surveys, interviews
- Approach for workshop design and facilitation methodology
- Coordination of stakeholder outreach plan for the review
- Stakeholder consultation:
 - Including key sector actors' interviews per category of stakeholder. Selection criteria will need to be developed to ensure that individuals/organisations chosen for in-depth interviews are representative;
 - HVT annual survey (with input from the consultant);
 - Participatory research action to unpack outcome generation and reflect on evidence based HVT programming and uptake and shared ownership with partners;
 - Any other methods, including with AI supportive technology.
- Documentation of stories of transformational change and successes emerging within the scope of the programme (undertaking a contribution analysis).
- Mapping of other programmes and comparison with HVT, highlighting the additionality of its scope to the sector.
- If possible, apply a counterfactual method to analyse the sphere of influence of the HVT programme (e.g. compare state of play in countries where HVT had little to no intervention, in assisted countries identify if HVT research influenced transport or other projects that were subsequently approved or are under preparation, including projects financed by multilateral development banks and other development partners).



5. Review Outputs

This review will deliver a presentation and a report to be reviewed by the HVT team and FCDO. A monthly check-in call with the HVT management team is expected for a report on progress. HVT and FCDO may also wish to use excerpts from this review to report on progress externally.

Deliverable Milestone	Completion Date	Indicative payment schedule
Kick-off meeting and review questions finalised (Task 1 and 2).	May 2024	10%
HVT to provide documentation for the consultant to commence external review (Task 3).	May 2024	
Human success story on addressing climate change and transport (Task 5).	30th June 2024	30%
Ongoing check-in meetings and ad-hoc discussion with the relevant HVT team members. Inception report (Task 4).	30th June 2024	10%
Draft final report for HVT team to review and comment (Task 6).	31st October 2024	20%
Meeting to discuss report and comments from HVT team (Task 6).	15 th November 2024	
Final report to be presented to FCDO (Task 6)	30 th November 2024	
Completion – FCDO’s approval of the final report (Task 6).	15 th December 2024	30%



6. Recipient Benefits

The main recipients of the external review are HVT and FCDO, the sole funder of HVT, and other potential funders of future programming in the sector.

To a wider extent, certain findings of this review may be shared with relevant transport decision-makers and development policy makers in central and local government, and transport professionals in the private sector in African and South Asian LMICs, in line with the scope of the HVT programme. Recipients may also include multilateral development banks, multilateral and bilateral donors, and research organisations in developed and developing countries.

7. Expertise Required

This is a specialised piece of work which requires in-depth knowledge and experience in the field of reviews of large ODA funded programmes. It would be beneficial for the consultant to understand FCDO rules and policies, the use of logical frameworks and theory of change (ToC), knowledge of the transport sector and experience of working in the field of climate change.

The reviewer shall have expertise in developing questionnaires and conducting interviews with selected stakeholders, as well as recording and analysing respective data. They should have demonstrable experience of developing convincing contribution case studies. Specifically, the consultant(s) should have:

- At least 5-7 years of demonstrable experience in leading (designing and undertaking) large-scale, multi-country reviews and/or evaluations in Sub-Saharan Africa and in Asia;
- Postgraduate degree in research-oriented social sciences, e.g. development studies, public policy, sociology, or related disciplines;
- Demonstrable knowledge and experience of the transport sector in developing countries, including the issues of climate change and renewable energy;
- Experience with qualitative participatory research methodologies;
- Experience delivering outcome harvesting and/or contribution analysis
- Demonstrable experience in policy and advocacy programming;
- Demonstrable experience of collaborative learning approaches;
- Ability to respond to comments and questions in a timely, appropriate manner;
- Excellent verbal and written communication in English

8. Proposal items

Proposals should include a clearly stated approach on the following:

Transport sector knowledge and experience in research and writing research reports

- Applicants are required to provide detailed CVs/Resumes for any key personnel who will be involved with this Grant Agreement together with proposed Project structure, intended position of the key personnel in the Project, and main responsibilities. CVs should include professional memberships of proposed staff working on this review. These should propose appropriate team structures.
- Applicants should provide at least two examples (with reference to specific roles, responsibilities, and activities the Applicant undertook) of previous work. These should include evidence of the consultant or organisation's expertise in delivering capacity development, training, or coaching within the transport sector clean energy/innovation sector
- Applicants may wish to refer to submitted examples of previous work for other clients.
- Include 1 or 2 case studies of similar studies that you conducted.



How you will successfully coordinate global and country level research (your organizational approach/ structure);

- Clearly detail how you plan to remain impartial in your review and include FCDO in your reviewing process. The applicant should also use examples that demonstrate how you have achieved this in previous projects.
- Your approach assessing HVT's Theory of Change, its assumptions, outcomes changes: intended and unintended; using the proposed research questions aligned with OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria, elaboration on key methodologies for data collection and data analysis;
- Your plan to deliver a collaborative approach throughout the review, considering that the expected process will be highly participatory with various stakeholders operating at distinct levels;
- Proposed strategies for validation and dissemination of the findings of the study, we expect a minimum of one workshop with stakeholders;

Financial proposal

- Applicants are required to provide day rates for all staff grades and to input the days involved for each key milestone of the review.
- Please note that the maximum budget for this review is £80,000 (although scoring will consider value for money and absolute cost criteria), and it is envisaged that the work will be undertaken over a 9-month period from contracting.

Proposals should be sent to HVT.Procurement@dt-global.com by COB 15th of May 2024.

