



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference (ToR) for Market Research on the IT Sector and Skills Landscape April 2025

1. Presentation of Passerelles Numeriques

Passerelles Numériques is a non-profit organization under French law, created in 2005, registered to operate in Cambodia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Madagascar. Its mission is to unlock the potential of disadvantaged youth by giving them access to education, and the means to acquire key skills in the digital sector. PN goal is that each student finds a quality and stable job allowing them and their families to escape poverty in a sustainable way and contribute to the social and economic development of their country. PN is committed to gender parity – at least half of our students are girls.

By offering free, professional and quality training in a growing sector, PN allows marginalized populations to access higher education.

The training programs aim at vulnerable young people aged from 17 to 23 years old. The beneficiaries are selected based on their extremely precarious economic situation. They mainly come from remote and rural areas where education and employment opportunities are scarce, and do not have the means to pursue higher education. The training program provided includes 1 to 2 internships in a company and support towards employment. The course also includes modules related to professional behavior.

The PN training program was replicated in the four countries of intervention, but also adapted to the needs and context of each country.



Since the beginning in 2025, PN has contributed to the training of more than 3 000 students in the four countries and 92% of alumni found a job less than two months after graduation. More than 90% of PN'alumnies work in IT sector.

2. Context of the market research

In the countries where Passerelles Numériques opened a center, the offer of professional training is insufficient and costly while on the other hand IT companies has increasing need for skilled workers. Also, as the IT sector is rapidly growing and evolving, with emerging technologies, such as cloud computing and cybersecurity, playing critical roles in shaping market trends. Passerelles Numériques needs to continuously update its understanding of market trends and dynamics to adapt the training curriculum to answer employment market needs and maximize the chance of the students to enter the job market and build a career in finding an internship and be employed at the end of their training. Also, AI is changing the configuration of the industry and PN wants to grab the opportunity of integrating AI courses in the curriculum.

Thus, it has been decided to initiate a market research, in 2025, to update understanding of IT market dynamics, identifying key trends, new pedagogy and training initiatives. This study aims at providing strategic recommendations for positioning Passerelles Numériques in the IT market evolving landscape and facilitate the curriculum update, on technical skills in Computer Science (Web Development, System & Network Administration or cybersecurity) but also the wide range of soft and employability skills (such as autonomy, critical thinking and self-confidence).

3. Objectives of the market research

The purpose of this market study is to provide an in-depth, data-driven analysis of the IT sector across the following key dimensions:

Market Trends and Growth Potential

- a. Assess current and emerging trends in IT, including but not limited to cloud computing, enterprise software, and cybersecurity.
- b. Forecast the sector's growth potential over the next 3–5 years.

AI and Technical Skills Needs

- c. Identify present and future demands for AI-related skills among companies, public institutions, and other key sectors.

Soft Skills and Pedagogical Innovations

- d. Identify essential soft and life skills required in the IT sector (e.g., communication, problem-solving, adaptability).
- e. Assess innovations in education and training, especially those based on 21st-century learning frameworks (e.g., critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, digital fluency).

Stakeholder Mapping

- f. Identify and map key public and private stakeholders across education, training, and IT employment sectors.
- g. Explore potential collaboration opportunities with actors likely to have increasing IT talent needs.

IT Companies' Needs and Challenges

- h. Understand business challenges, talent acquisition issues, and innovation needs of IT firms.

Strategic Recommendations

- i. Provide actionable insights and recommendations for PN to strategically position itself as a relevant training provider and employment support actor in the IT ecosystem.
- j. Identify potential opportunities, threats, and priority areas for engagement.
- k. Highlight which are most urgent for immediate curriculum development or update.

4. Scope of the market research

The research will be conducted across Cambodia, and will include:

- a) Desk research on IT sector trends, labor market data (including how the potential employers can be segmented) and education systems
- b) Analysis through surveys and/or interviews of IT companies and training centers in digital sector (Pour un Sourire d'Enfant, Sipar, etc.), universities, public authorities, and other relevant stakeholders
- c) Analysis of data to identify gaps, opportunities, and strategic directions
- d) Development of a comprehensive report with recommendations.

5. Methodology

The consultant/research team is expected to propose a detailed methodology, including:

- **Primary data collection:** Interviews, focus groups, and/or online surveys.
- **Secondary data analysis:** Review of reports, labor market databases, industry white papers, and policy documents.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Participatory approach to ensure relevance and accuracy of insights.

Mixed-methods research (qualitative and quantitative) is strongly encouraged.

The external consultant will define the approach that will be taken to conduct the market research, detailing the methods and techniques.

a) Deliverables

Inception Report – including methodology, work plan, and data collection tools.

Stakeholder Map – including categories, roles, and potential synergies.

Interim Findings Brief – high-level summary of preliminary results.

Final Research Report – detailed findings, strategic analysis, recommendations.

Presentation of Results/Restitution workshop – slides to be presented to internal and external stakeholders.

b) Timeline

The total duration of the market research will be **five months**, starting in **June 2025** and concluding in **October 2025**. The final results will be presented during a **regional workshop** organized by PN in **October 2025** in **Cambodia**, where directors and managers from the four training centers (Madagascar, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Cambodia) will convene. The research findings will feed directly into the workshop's strategic development sessions.

The consultant will manage their own schedule, but the following timeline is provided as a reference framework:

Phase	Activities	Timeline	Linked Deliverables
Phase 1 Initial Research and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Kickoff and preparation meetings with PN and partners- Finalization of research objectives, methodology, and data sources	June 2025 (2 weeks)	Inception Report (including methodology, work plan, and data collection tools)
Phase 2 Primary and Secondary Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Desk research- Conduct interviews, surveys, and stakeholder engagement	July – August 2025	Stakeholder Mapping Ongoing data collection inputs

Phase 3	- Analyze findings	September	Draft Final Report
		2025	
Data Analysis and Writing	- Synthesize data - Draft full report		
Phase 4	- Present findings at the regional workshop	October	Presentation of Results
		2025	
Presentation and Feedback	- Collect feedback - Finalize report		Final Research Report

8. Budget and Resources

The maximal budget for the market research is 10 000 US dollars including taxes and rates.

9. Role and responsibilities

Role and responsibilities of PN

Define the objectives and scope of the market research.
Provide background materials or relevant internal data.
Approve research methodology and tools (e.g., questionnaires, interview guides).
Facilitate access to internal stakeholders if needed.
Review and approve deliverables at each stage (drafts, final reports).
Ensure timely payment of agreed fees to the research provider.

Role and responsibilities of consultant

Design appropriate research methodology (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed).
Develop and test data collection tools (surveys, interview protocols, etc.).
Conduct primary and/or secondary research as specified.
Analyze and interpret data.
Maintain confidentiality and ethical standards.
Provide regular progress updates.
Deliver clear, actionable insights and recommendations in final report.

10. Submission guidelines

The applicant is invited to tender with :

A **technical proposal** that must indicate:

- The proposed methodology outline and timeline for the conduct of the market research
- The references and experience / CV of the consultant.s and/ or contributor.s and of key personal
- The reference of portfolio of similar work
- The provisional schedule of intervention as well as an estimate of the man/days required;

A **financial proposal** that must indicate:

- The total costs of the market research declined in each phase in DOLLARS including VAT and a breakdown of expected costs
- The payment terms (schedule)

The consultant will be chosen by the selection method based on quality and cost following the evaluation grid below:

Criterias	
TECHNICAL PROPOSAL	70%
Proposed methodology and working plan	25%
Demonstrated experience in market research in IT and/or education sector	15%
Understanding of digital skills ecosystems and labor market trends	15%
Relevant qualifications of team members	10%
Quality of the support offer	5%
FINANCIAL OFFER	30%
TOTAL	100%

Offers should be sent by email, with a request for acknowledgement of receipt, with the reference: “Application for market research”, to the following addresses:

aurelie.bureth@passerellesnumeriques.org

alexia.tafanelli@passerellesnumeriques.org

The deadline for sending applications is on the **31st May 2025.**