

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

Social Services Improvement Project (SSIP)

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANCY' COMPANY FOR DESIGNING, IMPLEMENTING and ORGANIZING TRAINING PROGRAM FOR PROFESSIONALS INCLUDED IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

I. OVERVIEW

The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (GoNM) has received Loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, for implementing the Macedonia Social Services Improvement Project (SSIP).

The SSIP development objective is to expand access to and improve the quality of social services, including preschool services, for vulnerable groups.

The Social Services Improvement Project will help address the challenges that are particularly associated with social exclusion of vulnerable groups and the low quality and fragmentation of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and social services.

By supporting strengthening the overall social protection delivery system for improved service provision and access to services by existing social assistance recipients and by vulnerable groups and by support of quality early learning for preschool children and their families and strengthen the transition into primary education with focus on inclusive education and learning, the project will contribute to the GoNM's ultimate objectives of alleviating poverty and enhancing human capital by supporting the strengthening of the effectiveness and efficiency of the GoNM's social safety net and thereby reducing the inter-generational transmission of poverty over the long run.

II. BACKGROUND

Highly trained, continually supported, and empowered staff are more likely to provide high-quality pedagogy and learning environments, which in turn, fosters children's overall development and increases learning outcomes. Scientific evidence emphasizes that ECEC is critical for the development of overall brain architecture and executive functioning and has enormous consequences over the course of a lifetime. The project aims at supporting activities that contribute to strengthening in-service training of professionals included in early childhood education and care . In particular, the Ministry of Labor and social Policy (MLSP) shall hire a consultant company for designing and implementing a framework for development of young children and collaborative

professional practices based on research from pedagogical, educational and psychological aspects to strengthen the competences of preschool practitioners in implementing knowledge and skills in their teaching practice and providing the utmost learning environment for increased educational attainment. The newly designed program for teacher training should tend to achieve modern approach and innovative practice in preschool education as a follow up and upgrade to the two previously conducted modules: Module 1 Early Learning and Development of the Child: Social-Emotional and Neuroeducation and Module 2 Stimulating Learning Environment: Constructivism, Problem-Based Service-Learning, Purposeful Play.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Supporting the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) in the process of improving the quality of preschool services in the Republic of North Macedonia through designing and implementing of national ECEC preschool professionals program.

IV. SPECIFIC TASKS

The company shall design and conduct training program in line with the required competences of professionals included in early childhood education and care defined under the national standards covering the following topic:

-Module 3: Learning environment and inclusion

Requirements for module design

The designed module should be based on the following principles:

1. Is content focused

Professional development that focuses on teaching strategies associated with specific curriculum content supports preschool professionals' learning within their classroom contexts.

2. Incorporates active learning

Active learning engages preschool professionals directly in designing and trying out teaching strategies, providing them with an opportunity to engage in the same style of learning they are designing for preschool children. Such professional development uses authentic artifacts, interactive activities, and other strategies to provide deeply embedded, highly contextualized professional learning.

3. Supports collaboration

High-quality professional development creates space for preschool professionals to share ideas and collaborate in their learning, often in job-embedded contexts. By working collaboratively, preschool professionals can create communities that

positively change the culture and instruction of their entire grade level, department, school, and/or district.

4. Uses **models** of effective practice

Curricular models and modeling of instruction provide preschool professionals with a clear vision of what best practices look like. Preschool professionals see models that include lesson plans, unit plans, sample child activities, observations of colleagues, and video or written cases of teaching.

5. Provides **coaching** and **expert support**

Coaching and expert support involve the one-on-one sharing of expertise about content and evidence-based practices, focused directly on preschool professionals' individual needs.

6. Offers **feedback** and **reflection**

High-quality professional learning frequently provides built-in time for preschool professionals to intentionally think about, receive input on, and make changes to their practice by facilitating reflection and soliciting feedback. This helps preschool professionals to thoughtfully move toward the expert visions of practice.

7. Is of **sustained duration**

Effective professional development provides preschool professionals with adequate time to learn, practice, implement, and reflect upon new strategies that facilitate changes in their practice.

The company shall perform the following tasks

Develop methodology and design of the training that embeds the above-mentioned training principles, propose a model for conducting the trainings and prepare materials for the above-mentioned training module. Prepared and approved training materials need to be placed on the on-online platform. The aim of placing the training materials on the platform is to make sure that materials are accessible for the trainees. The platform will be provided by the client, and in addition will serve for space for teachers to share ideas and collaborate in their learning .

- Conducting trainings led by an international expert for approximately 1500 professionals included in early childhood development process (preschool teachers, pedagogues, psychologists, speech therapists, defectologists, preschool social workers, preschool music teachers, preschool art teachers, preschool physical education teachers) .
- Conduct one-day training session for kindergarten directors to familiarize them with the underlining principals for importance of the conducive

learning environment and inclusion of children with different needs(approximately 70).

- Select and train local experts (individual consultants or consultancy company) that will be supporting the international expert and co-leading the training sessions. The local experts should be consisted of minimum 6 experts with knowledge and experience in pedagogy, education, psychology or related fields (preschool teachers-mentors in kindergarten, preschool teachers, university professor, psychologist, pedagogue, defectologist or speech therapist). The international expert shall be responsible in person mentoring and training of the selected local experts on the above-mentioned topic of the training module. The selection of the local and international consultants must be pre-approved by the Client.

- Responsible for training logistics. This includes organization of the regional trainings, arranging the training venues, arranging the accommodation for the experts, travel and food for the experts and for the trainees , translation, technical equipment, preparation of materials, provide audio/video recording and photo session of the workshops etc; (In the case of the length of the trainings being more than 4 hours, food and refreshments must be provided for all the trainees and experts.)

- Leading training sessions along with local experts by using the following method: trainings of approximately 1500 professionals included in early childhood education and care process and the training of the local expert team shall be conducted in person by the international expert. Collaboration and practice sessions, as well as coaching and expert support can be conducted on-line and/or in person by the local experts.

- Provide coordination and administrative support and ensure payment for all the activities in the process of organizing and conducting the trainings, create and maintain course schedules and calendars.

- Produce ECEC Training Manual for the training module before the start of the trainings and after approval of the Client distribute them to the trainees.

- Close cooperation MLSP/SSIP staff, Bureau for Development of Education (BDE).

V. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

To carry out this assignment, the Client seeks Consulting Company that needs to provide an Expert and Training Coordinator with relevant experience, including international and qualifications in their subject area as indicated further below. Consultant company should engage expert team consisted of minimum six local experts that will act as local support conducting the trainings.

The consultant firm shall possess the following relevant qualification

- Minimum 10 years of international work experience in educational program design, research, and training.
- The consultant should have performed at least three assignments in the past seven years, similar to the one described in the specific request for expression of interest (name of the assignment, description, duration, contract amount, reference). The list shall be supported with certificates on fulfilled contract obligations.
- Experience in educational program design, research, and training of preschool professionals .
- Experience in carrying out trainings for preschool professionals and professional advancement in competencies.
- Expert knowledge in developing training modules and materials, and able to deliver specialized trainings to the targeted audience.
- Fluency in English (oral and written).
- Knowledge of the country educational context and early childhood education and care frameworks will be considered an asset.
- Experience in conducting research involving childhood development will be considered an asset.

The Consultant company must provide at least the following expert staff for completing the assignment:

1. International expert

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- An interdisciplinary professional with advanced university degree (PhD) in pedagogy, education, psychology, defectology or related fields.
- Experience in educational program design, research, and training of preschool professionals shall be considered as an advantage.
- Minimum 10 years of international experience in provision of relevant trainings.

- Up-to date knowledge, skills, conceptual understanding and comprehensive practice and/or experience in education obtained through research, programming, evaluation, and/or academic endeavors.
- Expert trainer with strong skill in communication, evaluation, analysis, quality and quantitative research and reporting.
- Expert trainer with excellent analytical and written skills.
- Excellent knowledge of English Language.

2. Training coordinator with the following minimum qualifications

- Minimum 10 years of experience as a Training Coordinator or similar role.
- Minimum 5 years of work experience in providing administrative support to project teams.
- Previous experience in organizing and planning trainings and in providing logistical services.
- Excellent verbal and written Macedonian and English language skills.

VI. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

The consultant company shall deliver reports for the activities implemented regarding the module:

1. Teacher Training Manual (before the training)
2. Report 1: Proposed Design and methodology of the training module
3. Report 2: Proposed local experts support team for assisting and co-leading the training sessions
4. Report 3: Training methodology of the selected local experts support team
5. Reports submitted after each on the trainings conducted

All reports in English and Macedonian language must be sent for approval to the SSIP Coordinator for Early Childhood Education and Care.

VII. SELECTION METHOD AND CONTRACT

The selection method is “Quality and Cost Based Selection” and the contract shall be Time Based according to the World Bank Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing (IPF) Borrowers – Procurement in IPF of Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, (Regulations) issued in July 2016, revised November 2017, www.worldbank.org.

VIII. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The consultant is expected to provide his services starting February 2022, and the expected duration of the assignment is until July 30, 2023.