**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Component 2** **– IMPROVING Preschool Institutions Self-Evaluation PROCESS**

1. **Background and objective of the project**

**Background Information**

The Government of Serbia and the World Bank have identified skills development and inclusion of vulnerable groups as strategic priorities for their next phase of cooperation, based on a Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) and Country Partnership Framework between the two partners. In particular, the SCD highlights the importance of building human capital to increase labor productivity and enhance social inclusion through closing education enrollment gaps for low-income and Roma students starting in pre-primary. Quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) programs play a critical role in laying the necessary foundation for skills development early on and for narrowing the equity gap in education access and performance.

The Inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care project also directly contributes to the goals outlined in the Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia until 2020 (SED 2020) and to its related Action Plan. This strategy, which was adopted in 2012, defines mechanisms for assuring accessibility, quality, and equity in ECEC and sets clear priorities for: (i) increasing coverage; (ii) enhancing quality of the service delivery and outcomes; (iii) increasing efficiency; and (iv) attaining and maintaining relevance for the overall system. The project will directly support these priorities through its various components.

**Objective**

The objective of the project is to improve access to quality Early Childhood Education and Care, with a focus on children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds for all children ages 0 to 6.5 years. Activities for children ages 3 to 6.5 years focus on increasing access to inclusive quality preschools (i.e. child-centered and with age-appropriate learning opportunities) while also supporting their transition to the early grades of primary education. Activities for younger children, i.e. from birth onwards focus on empowering parents and families to support children’s holistic development through increased knowledge about the importance of early stimulation at home and access to relevant services in the community.

The Project is implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) with the support of Project Management Unit (PMU).

The overall fiduciary responsibilities of the Project, procurement, financial management and disbursement issues, rest on the Central Fiduciary Unit (CFU). The CFU is housed under the Ministry of Finance (MoF) as per the agreement reached between the MoF and the MoESTD.

1. **Objective and Scope of the Assignment Required**

Sub-Component 2.3.b of the Inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Project deals with planning and implementing the activities that contribute to the improvement of the preschool institutions (PIs) quality evaluation system as part of the new curriculum implementation support[[1]](#footnote-1). As envisaged in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), the activities in this area should add to the evaluation with the view to building quality and providing continual support to PIs in the process of improving the quality of preschool education.

The activities under the Sub-Component 2.3.b should also contribute to the improvement of the process and the practice of self-evaluation towards building the quality of kindergartens by means of developing and applying different quality monitoring and evaluation techniques and instruments, and building competences of practitioners for the development of reflective practice in line with the principles and values in the ECEC sector (self-evaluation to be used in changing and developing reflective practice).

Practitioners in kindergartens (nursery teachers, preschool teachers, expert associates, principals) are recognised as key actors in the preschool system and the carriers of change of practice in line with the key curricular concept in ECEC. In this respect, self-evaluation is seen as a process that can assist practitioners in reaching decisions on changing and developing their practice in line with the new curricular concept, starting from understanding the current practice and the context in which it develops, as well as from the realistic assessment of own capacities.

In the second half of 2019, under ECEC project, on the sample of six preschool institutions from Belgrade (institutions from central, suburban and satellite municipalities that differ in size, number of kindergartens and groups), the current PIs self-evaluation practice was evaluated in order to issue suggestions for its improvement. The following aspects were evaluated: understanding the purpose of self-evaluation; methodology of the self-evaluation process; improving self-evaluation practice from the PIs perspective; horizontal learning and reflective practice in PIs.

The results of the evaluation show the acceptance and understanding of the purpose of self-evaluation. However there is the pressing need to continue supporting the process by promoting the culture of self-evaluation. It is important to provide the common understanding of the cycle and the role of self-evaluation in developing and changing practice in a kindergarten by finding different means of support in the process of implementing Curricular Framework, including mentoring support. Also, it is necessary to develop the continual information and professional development systems inside a PI. Participation of parents and the local community should be increased by setting the conditions for their crucial inclusion in self-evaluation and reconsideration of the past and the existing practice in a PI. It is vital to create the system of external and internal support to the self-evaluation of institutions that includes different forms and levels of support (trainings, mentoring, support offered by education advisors and advisors as external associates, suggesting instruments and providing additional resources, good practice examples, exchange inside a PI, exchange between PIs, cooperation with a PI that cultivates successful practice in the area of self-evaluation).

Based on the Report on self-evaluation practice in PIs and in order to improve the methodology and practice in the area of self-evaluation, there is the necessity of preparing the instructive Guidebook on Self-Evaluation of PIs, which would include the requirements of the new curricular concept, current strategic documents in the area of ECEC quality (Standards of Competencies for Preschool teachers, Preschools Quality Standards…), and which would be an instrument in the development of reflective practice, improving preschool teachers’ competencies and development of learning community that add to the improvement of the quality of practice and the ECEC sector in general.

Another objective of the activity is to provide support to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technical Development (MoESTD) and the Institute for the Education Quality and Evaluation (IEQE) in providing resources for the full implementation of the system of preschool education quality evaluation based on the revised Preschool Quality Standards. Since the lists of descriptors of indicators and instrument have been created, in order to achieve more operative usage, it is necessary to split it into several independent instruments.

To the purpose of meeting the PDO of the ECEC Project in the area of preschool services quality improvement, the activity should enable the collection of data on the initial position when it comes to the quality of work in PIs in 50% of nuclei of change. That means that in each year of the Project implementation (i.e. since the start of the successive inclusion of PIs in the PCF support programme), it should be decided which facilities in the capacity of nuclei of change will be included in the support programme (Sub-component 2.1), whether the representative sample formed for the purpose of conducting the Baseline Study included 50% of nuclei of change, and if not, to organise the process of data collection by identical methodology that was applied in the preparation of the Baseline Study.

**Detailed Tasks and Responsibilities**

The development of resources for the self-evaluation of PIs must be in line with the new curricular concept, current legislation and recommendations for the improvement of practice in the area of self-evaluation in the relevant documents (the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System, the Rule Book on Preschool Curriculum Framework, the Rule Book on Preschools Quality Standards, the Rule Book on Standards of Competence for Teachers and Their Professional Development).

The purpose of the activity is to support MoESTD and IEQE in improving the quality of preschool education through improving the self-evaluation process and procedures in PIs.

All the activities will be monitored and the results verified by IEQE and approved by MoESTD.

The Consultant / Consulting Firm shall be responsible for the following activities:

**Task 1: Devising the methodology and the work plan**

It includes the following:

* Preparing the proposed methodology and the work plan;
* Organising work and activities of the members of the Reference Group selected and appointed by MoESTD. The role of the Reference Group is to provide comments and suggestions for improving draft documents prepared by the Consulting Firm in line with their ToR;
* Organising and facilitating consultation process with all the relevant stakeholders and based on it, revising the methodology and the work plan;
* Preparing the Inception Report, also comprising the plan of activities on the project specifying key tasks and objectives, the timeline, and main bodies in charge of the activities.

**Deliverable No. 1:**

* The Inception Report.

Within 15 (fifteen) calendar days from the day of Contract signing, the Consultant / Consulting Firm submits to IEQE and MoESTD for their approval and no objection the Inception Report including the work plan.

**Task 2: Providing resources for PIs self-evaluation**

The Consultant / Consulting Firm is expected to devise the methodology for self-evaluation in line with the Preschools Quality Standards and the Rule Book on Preschool Quality Evaluation, recommendations envisaged by the Report on self-evaluation practice in PIs, new PCF and other current documents in the area (Standards of Competence for Preschool Teachers and other laws and regulations), as well as to prepare the proposed instruments for the self-evaluation process.

For the implementation of this task, the Consultant / consulting Firm shall:

* Prepare draft PIs self-evaluation concept by taking into consideration theoretical bases and values of PCF and the current regulations in the area of preschool quality evaluation (definition of key concepts; the purpose of self-evaluation; the principles of self-evaluation, such as participation of different actors and similar; different methods and techniques in the self-evaluation processes; possible usage of results of self-evaluation for improving the quality of preschool services offered by PIs – the practice of preparing documents by PIs based on the data…);
* Propose additional indicators of PI quality in line with the Rule Book on Preschool Quality Evaluation;
* Propose instruments for self-evaluation of PI quality in all the areas defined in the Preschool Quality Standards that would provide points of view of different actors;
* Propose instruments for additionally defined quality indicators.

**Deliverables No. 2:**

* Prepared concept of self-evaluation covering all the areas of preschool quality (which will be included in the Guidebook on Self-Evaluation of PIs);
* Defined additional indicators of the quality of services offered by PIs;
* Developed proposed self-evaluation instruments.

Within 120 (one hundred and twenty) calendar days from the day of Contract signing, the Consultant / Consulting Firm submits to IEQE and MoESTD for their approval and no objection the Self-Evaluation Methodology.

**Task 3: Piloting the self-evaluation instruments in PIs**

It includes the following activities of the Consultant / Consulting Firm:

* Devising methodology for piloting the self-evaluation instruments (in two kindergartens operating inside a PI with the already developed culture and good practice of self-evaluation);
* Piloting the proposed set of self-evaluation instruments;
* Preparing the report on piloting the self-evaluation instruments;
* Revising and improving the instruments by incorporating the piloting results;
* Adapting instruments to digital format to be made available to PIs on the IEQE’s web-site.

**Deliverables No. 3:**

* The report on piloting the self-evaluation instruments submitted;
* Final versions of instruments to be used by PIs in the self-evaluation process submitted;
* Instruments that PIs can use in the process of self-evaluation made available in digital format.

Within 180 (one hundred and eighty) calendar days from the day of Contract signing, the Consultant / Consulting Firm submits to IEQE and MoESTD for their approval and no objection the deliverables no. 3.

**Task 4: Preparing the Guidebook on Self-Evaluation of PIs**

The Guidebook on Self-Evaluation of PIs must be in line with the current legislation and the recommendations for improving practice in the area of self-evaluation in the relevant documents (the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System, the Rule Book on Preschool Curriculum Framework, the Rule Book on Preschools Quality Standards, the Rule Book on Standards of Competence for Teachers and Their Professional Development). In preparing the Guidebook, it is necessary to include the findings of the Report on self-evaluation practice in PIs, the Inception Report, and both international and national good-practice examples in the area of self-evaluation of PIs.

It includes the following activities of the Consultant / Consulting Firm:

* Creating draft contents and structure of the Guidebook;
* Selecting proposed instruments to support the self-evaluation process that, based on the piloting results, meet the methodological criteria for the use in PIs, and proposing means of processing and using the received data (examples given in the Guidebook);
* Submitting to MoESTD and IEQE for harmonisation the Draft Guidebook and the selected instruments, and based on their comments and suggestions, conceptually and stylistically redrafting the Guidebook;
* Preparing the Guidebook for publication in the electronic format.

**Deliverables No. 4:**

* The Guidebook on Self-Evaluation of PIs prepared and delivered in the electronic format.

Within 210 (two hundred and ten) calendar days from the day of Contract signing, the Consultant / Consulting Firm submits the Guidebook to IEQE and MoESTD for their approval and no objection.

**Task 5: Supporting PIs in improving their self-evaluation process**

Supporting PIs in improving the self-evaluation competencies of their staff on the basis of the revised quality framework comprises the following activities:

**Task 5.1. Creating resources for providing support to PIs in the implementation of the Guidebook**

It includes the following activities of the Consultant / Consulting Firm:

* Creating scenario and resources for a single-day training of PI practitioners for the implementation of the Guidebook. Depending on the epidemiological situation, the training will be delivered in vivo or as a distance-learning programme, therefore it is necessary to prepare the training in the electronic format as well;
* Creating scenario for a single-day training of trainers/mentors (ToT);
* Creating a model of providing the mentoring support to PIs in the self-evaluation process (the model is also to include the means of monitoring and supervising the mentoring support, as well as the means of reporting on the given mentoring support);
* Creating scenario of a single-day training for mentors who would provide support to PIs in the self-evaluation process;
* Selecting and training the team of 30 trainers/mentors, meaning the provision of a two-day ToT for people would provide support to PIs in implementing the Guidebook (a single-day ToT for holding seminars and a single-day training for providing mentoring support to PIs).

**Deliverables No. 5.1:**

* The scenario and resources for the two-day training for the PI practitioners;
* The scenario for training the trainers who are to train the PI practitioners;
* The model of providing mentoring support to PIs in the self-evaluation process;
* The scenario of a single-day training for mentors to provide mentoring support to Pis;
* The group of 30 trainers/mentors trained;
* The trainings prepared in the online format.

Within 270 (two hundred and seventy) calendar days from the day of Contract signing, the Consultant / Consulting Firm submits to IEQE and MoESTD for their approval and no objection the deliverables 5.1.

**Task 5.2. Improving the capacities of practitioners for the self-evaluation of PIs in line with the Guidebook**

It includes the following activities of the Consultant / Consulting Firm:

* Providing training to 600 representatives of all public PIs for the application of the Guidebook on Self-Evaluation of PIs;
* Providing mentoring support to PIs in the process of self-evaluation and creating the report on the mentoring support given. The mentoring support is to include 78 PIs (that have been or will be included in the PCF implementation programme in 2019, 2020 and 2021, but not participating in the SUPER Project). In selecting and determining the timeline for the provision of trainings and mentoring support, please take into account the moment of inclusion of a PI in the support programme to the implementation of PCF, and out of a PI, please select those kindergartens that are the nuclei of change, and mentor them through the process;
* Selecting and preparing for the upload to the web-sites of the ECEC Project, IEQE, etc. the examples of good self-evaluation practice collected during the provision of the mentoring support to PIs;
* Preparing the final summary report on supporting PIs through the self-evaluation process.

**Deliverables No. 5.2:**

* The lists of participants with the training agendas, evaluation lists and the report on the trainings provided;
* The reports on the provided mentoring support to PIs;
* Examples of inspirational practice prepared for the publication on the Project web-site;
* The Final Summary Report on supporting PIs through the self-evaluation process.

Within 270 (two hundred and seventy) calendar days from the day of Contract signing, the Consultant / Consulting Firm starts with the activity 5.2 and until June 2022 at the latest submits to IEQE and MoESTD for their approval and no objection the deliverables 5.2.

1. **Reporting obligations**

The Consultant / Consulting Firm and the MoESTD’s Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will regularly meet at the agreed intervals or more often if needed so as to secure the successful cooperation. The activities are to be conducted according to the quarterly work plan subject to the approval of the ECEC Project Component 2 Coordinator, the PIU Director and the Project Coordinator. The deliverables will be assessed by the Component 2 Coordinator and approved by the PIU Director and the Project Coordinator. The Consultant / Consulting Firm will submit to MoESTD and PIU the periodical and annual progress reports.

1. **Consultant/Firm Qualifications**

The Consultant/Firm is to meet the following requirements:

* The Consultant/Firm shall be registered as a legal entity;
* The Consultant/Firm shall have appropriate professional, organizational and logistical capacities necessary for carrying out the assignment on the territory of the Republic of Serbia;
* At least three years of experience in carrying out the activities on improving the education quality (experience in the Republic of Serbia and the region shall be considered an advantage);
* Preferably at least three years of experience in monitoring and evaluating the education quality (experience in the Republic of Serbia and the region shall be considered an advantage);
* Preferably the experience of participating in at least three projects involved in monitoring and evaluating the education quality (experience in the Republic of Serbia and the region shall be considered an advantage);

The Consultant/Firm is to provide two key experts:

K1: Team leader and senior expert associate for the PI quality evaluation, with the following qualifications and experience:

* + University degree in Pedagogy, Psychology, Sociology or other fields of Education, Social Studies and Humanities;
  + At least 8 years of relevant professional experience in education policies and practices in Serbia;
  + Experience in education quality monitoring and evaluation is preferable;
  + Participation in projects dealing with education quality monitoring and evaluation is preferable;
  + Comprehensive knowledge of education policy and main initiatives in preschool education is desirable;
  + Possessing professional development certificates in the area close to the one described in ToR is a plus;
  + Excellent oral and written Serbian language skills and good command of English.

К2: Senior expert associate for preschool education, with the following qualifications and experience:

- University degree in Pedagogy, Psychology, Sociology or other fields of Education, Social Studies and Humanities;

* At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in educational institutions and excellent knowledge of education policies and main initiatives in preschool education;
* Experience in organising and conducting self-evaluation procedures in PIs is preferable;
* Comprehensive knowledge of Preschool Curriculum Framework is preferred;
* Participation in projects aimed at improving the PIs quality evaluation is preferable;
* Possessing professional development certificates in the area close to the one described in ToR is a plus;
* Excellent oral and written Serbian language skills and good command of English.

Alongside the letter of interest, the Consultant is required to submit the key expert’s CV.

Following the evaluation of the received letters of interest, the Consultant/Firm with the highest score in the evaluation will be asked to submit their technical and financial proposal.

1. **Selection method**

The selection method is the Selection Based on the Consultants’ Qualifications (CQS) in accordance with the procedures specified in *the Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by the World Bank Borrowers*, January 2011 (revised July 2014).

1. **Terms of Payment**

The Contract will be the Standard World Bank Lump Sum Contract for small assignments. The payment shall be based on deliverables/reports approved by the Project Coordinator. The Contract costs will include remuneration and reimbursable costs referring to the assignment.

1. **Conflict of Interest**

The engaged Consultant must not be involved in any other activities related to this Project.

1. Project appraisal document, Document of The World Bank, Report No: PAD157117 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)