**THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

**INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**ASSOCIATE FOR SUPPORTING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT IN KINDERGARTENS AS PART OF THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY MODEL**

**– CONSULTANT NO. ONE –**

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 2030 (SED 2030) and to its related Action Plan. This strategy 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**

ECEC Project Component 2: Strengthening the quality of preschool services, aims at supporting further increase of quality of the preschool system, characterised by the holistic approach to supporting physical, emotional and cognitive development of children. In addition to providing trainings for various groups of practitioners, developing guidebooks, and providing mentoring support to preschool institutions (PIs), the support programme to the implementation of the new Preschool Curriculum Framework (PCF) also involves supporting learning by means of two types of horizontal exchange between practitioners: the exchange with kindergartens acting as centres of clusters – the Modeling Learning Community (MLC), and the exchange with peers in the same phase of the new PCF implementation – the Professional Learning Community model (PLC).

Under Sub-Component 2.1 and with UNICEF as an implementing partner, the Professional Learning Community model was developed, the trainings for coordinators from the nuclei of change was developed, and five scenarios on the segments important for the development of the actual curriculum were prepared: supporting the well-being of children (e.g. play and inclusive approach in the development of the actual curriculum), space use and structuring, preschool teachers’ strategies in curriculum development (e.g. planning and documenting).

PLC model is to be implemented in several phases: 1) training of coordinators of the horizontal exchange from all the nuclei of change; 2) planning the events of the horizontal exchange (coupling participants/kindergartens acting as nuclei of change based on the information received from mentors on the advancement in the specific segments of the mentoring support, e.g. space, actual curriculum development, documenting…); 3) professional meetings in kindergartens (collecting material for the realization of horizontal exchange events, reflective approach to the practice of preschool teachers in kindergartens acting as nuclei of change by means of the PLC methodology (developed scenarios) and the preparation of different kinds of material on the selected topics (for example, 5–15 min. videos, photos, documents – plans made by teachers and stories of the project, presentations); 4) professional meetings of expert associates and teachers from different PIs (reflective activities, exchange, deliberation and defining changes through feedback (up to two presentations of practice from two PIs on one topic)); 5) the change of practice in action following the horizontal exchange events.

The model was successfully piloted in PI Radost from Čačak. In the piloting stage, the need was identified for the support to kindergartens acting as nuclei of change in the development of the reflective practice in professional meetings in kindergartens, since it is the most demanding and key link in the implementation of the model. Professional support in kindergartens acting as nuclei of change takes place in five stages and the additional support in the development of the reflective practice is especially needed in the implementation of Stages 2, 4, and 5.

Figure 2: Stages of professional meetings of practitioners in kindergartens

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| Stage 1 | Activities on three-week presentation to teachers of the PLC model and reflective and collaborative techniques of the flipped classroom method implementation (based on the model of training for the horizontal exchange coordinators). Splitting teachers in two groups based on topics. | | | |
| Stage 2 | Meeting with both groups of teachers | Opening discussion on scenarios from the point of view of PCF | Presenting techniques and tools for developing the scenarios | Presenting the material preparation process |
| Stage 3 | Teachers develop reflective and social practice by preparing the material | Teachers from the same educational group jointly analyse examples from practice | Using techniques and tools in the preparation of the material | Expert associate offers professional and technical support |
| Stage 4 | Joint analysis of the prepared material | Presenting an example or two of teachers’ self-reflection per meeting | Group analysis and discussion by means of guided reflective questions | Choosing examples and preparing presentations for the single-day professional meeting (SDPM) |
| Stage 5 | Exchange of material with practitioners from different PI | Meeting all the teachers from Stage 1 | Getting to know the material developed by different PI | Team preparation of feedback for the peers from different PI |

**Detailed Tasks and Responsibilities**

Associate for Supporting Reflective Practice Development in Kindergartens as Part of the Professional Learning Community Model provides support to the practitioners in kindergartens acting as nuclei of change in the process of preparing and holding professional meetings. As a facilitator, the Consultant supports practitioners in developing, building and practicing professional knowledge and skills with their peers in a supportive surrounding, and also practice different reflective and collaborative techniques of learning that would help them in reflecting on their own beliefs and actions, as well as in offering and receiving constructive and expert feedback from their peers with the view to contributing to the improvement of their own practice and developing reflective culture in kindergartens. In that respect, the Consultant contributes to the development of the supportive and safe surrounding for learning, to the development of the cooperative and partner relationships between the participants, guides the group through their tasks and processes, provides feedback to the participants during joint learning activities, and in various ways contributes to the development of reflective practice in kindergartens as a part of the PLC model.

The role of the Consultant is to provide additional support to the horizontal exchange coordinators (the persons from kindergartens acting as nuclei of change responsible for the coordination of the process) and teachers from kindergartens acting as nuclei of change in the development of the reflective practice in professional meetings held according to the PLC model: a) upon the completion of Stage 2; b) during Stage 4; and c) during Stage 5 in the preparation and holding of a single-day professional meeting (SDPM). Associate for Supporting Reflective Practice Development in Kindergartens as Part of the Professional Learning Community Model directly cooperates with the Component 2 Coordinator and the UNICEF team which provides the trainings for the horizontal exchange coordinators from all the kindergartens acting as nuclei of change. The UNICEF team plans the horizontal exchange events by coupling the kindergartens acting as nuclei of change from different PIs based on the received information from a mentor on the progress of a PI in specific segments of the mentoring support.

**Associate for Supporting Reflective Practice Development in Kindergartens as Part of the Professional Learning Community Model performs the following specific tasks and has the following responsibilities:**

• Supports the development of reflective practice in kindergartens according to the PLC model, as well as learning of practitioners in the same phase of PCF implementation through horizontal exchange of experience according to the PLC model developed under the Project. PLC model horizontal exchange meetings are organized in kindergartens acting as nuclei of change for several weeks, ending in a single-day professional meeting (SDPM) between 6 or 7 kindergartens acting as nuclei of change from different PIs.

The activities of the Consultant in the preparation of each SDPM shall be the following:

- During the online training organised by UNICEF, the Consultant establishes contact with horizontal exchange coordinators from the nuclei of change (forms database of contacts), presents all the means of support available in the process and agrees with them on the future cooperation;

- Prepares the material and a two-hour consultative online group meeting with the representatives of PIs following Stage 2 according to the developed scenario. The purpose of the meeting following Stage 2 is for the Consultant to offer support to the horizontal exchange coordinators in improving the quality of discussion in professional meetings with teachers (for example, to deepen reflection that would appear during the discussion and assure it is clear and specific, and that it promotes learning). Another activity during this meeting will be the analysis of experience of coordinators and teachers shared in the part of the discussion where they ask questions and receive answers in Stage 2 of the PLC model scenario;

- Prepares the material and organises a two-hour online group meeting during Stage 4. This meeting is to be organised in the phase of presenting the examples of teachers from the nuclei, before the selection of examples for SDPM. In this meeting, the Consultant supports the coordinators in selecting examples for SDPM (without discussing the actual content of examples). Specifically, the Consultant runs a workshop with tools that should help horizontal exchange coordinators to analyse each example according to the criteria for the selection of examples.

Note: Since in Stage 4 in kindergartens the model recommends the presentation of one or two examples per meeting, the number of meetings for presenting the examples will differ depending on the size of the nuclei. That is why it is important that the Consultant be in contact with the nuclei and flexibly schedule the meetings;

- Prepares the material and organises a two-hour consultative online group meeting during Stage 5. The purpose of this online meeting is the preparation for SDPM, specifically offering support in developing presentation skills regarding the content, structure and means of presenting them. This meeting will be attended by 5 participants from 6 (or 7) PIs (the horizontal exchange coordinator plus 4 teachers whose examples will be presented in SDPM);

- Collects the most common questions and answers from the field, topics reflected upon on the meetings in kindergartens during the implementation of the PLC model, and examples prepared for SDPMs between 6 kindergartens;

- With the coordinators from the nuclei of change, the Consultant prepares the content of SDPM between the representatives of 6 (or 7) kindergartens, and moderates initial and final workshops on the single-day horizontal exchange between 6 (or 7) kindergartens;

- Prepares the report on the support offered during the practice reflection process according to the PLC model and the held SDPM.

**NOTE: The Consultant provides an online meeting platform (*Zoom* or any other).**

Deliverables per each SDPM/group of participants are as follows:

- the list of participants in, agenda and minutes of three consultative online meetings in a PI;

- the list of most frequently asked questions and answers in the implementation of the PLC model;

- the list of participants in, agenda and minutes of the held SDPM in standard forms and in the forms of reporting developed and demanded under the Project;

- database of examples used for the reflection in SDPM.

The maximum number of work days the Consultant would spend working with 6 (or 7) kindergartens acting as nuclei of change in the implementation of the PLC model shall be 5 (five) work days per horizontal exchange professional meeting, and it is envisaged that the Consultant works with 10 groups.

During the implementation of the PLC model, the Consultant shall offer support to the nuclei of change from the following PIs:

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| **Group no.** | **The year of PCF introduction** | **Members of the group of participants (PI)**  **(**kindergartens acting as nuclei of chang-KANCH**)** | **No. of nuclei of change** | **No. of participants in SDPM – PLC model** | **The expected time of report delivery** |
| **1** | 2020 | PI Naša radost, Subotica KANCH 1 | 6 | 30 | March 2022 |
| PI Naša radost, Subotica KANCH 2 |
| PI Naša radost, Subotica KANCH 3 |
| PI Vera Gucunja, Sombor |
| PI Čarolija, Vršac |
| PI Dragoljub Udicki, Kikinda |
| **2** | 2020 | PI Naše dete, Šabac KANCH 2 | 6 | 30 | March 2022 |
| PI Naše dete, Šabac KANCH 3 |
| PI Slava Ković Bogatić, Bogatić |
| PI Užice, Užice |
| PI Radost, Čajetina |
| PI Olga Grbić, Kosjerić |
| **3** | 2021 | PI Zrenjanin, Zrenjanin KANCH 1 | 6 | 30 | August 2022 |
| PI Zrenjanin, Zrenjanin KANCH 2 |
| PI Naši biseri, Kanjiža |
| PI Snežana, Senta |
| PI Čika Jova Zmaj, Ada |
| PI Labud Pejović, Bečej |
| **4** | 2021 | PI Bambi, Kula | 6 | 30 | August 2022 |
| PI Boško Buha, Vrbas |
| PI Veljko Vlahović, Temerin |
| PI Mladost, Bačka Palanka |
| PI Jelica Stanivuković Šilja, Šid |
| PI Poletarac, Ruma |
| **5** | 2021 | PI Dečija radost, Pančevo KANCH 1 | 6 | 30 | August 2022 |
| PI Dečija radost, Pančevo KANCH 2 |
| PI Naša radost, Kovin |
| PI Anđelka Đurić, Bela Crkva |
| PI Poletarac, Alibunar |
| PI Boško Buha, Beograd – Palilula KANCH 1 |
| **6** | 2022 | PI Detinjstvo, Žabalj | 7 | 35 | December 2022 |
| PI Plavi čuperak, Titel |
| PI Pava Sudarski, Novi Bečej |
| PI Radost, Čoka |
| PI Ljuba Stanković, Beočin |
| PI Dečija radost, Irig |
| PI Boško Buha, Inđija |
| **7** | 2022 | PI Bambi, Bačka Topola | 7 | 35 | December 2022 |
| PI Petar Pan, Mali Iđoš |
| PI Pčelica, Apatin |
| PI Poletarac, Odžaci |
| PI Kolibri, Bač |
| PI Radost, Srbobran |
| PI Včielka, Bački Petrovac |
| **8** | 2022 | PI Kolibri, Kovačica | 6 | 30 | December 2022 |
| PI Bambi, Opovo |
| PI Srećno detinjstvo, Plandište |
| PI Poletarac, Sečanj |
| PI Desanka Maksimović, Žitište |
| PI Srećno dete, Novi Kneževac |
| **9** | 2022 | PI Savski venac, Beograd – Savski venac | 6 | 30 | December 2022 |
| PI Vrtić Lane, Beograd – Grocka |
| PI Naša radost, Beograd – Sopot |
| PI Perka Vićentijević, Beograd – Obrenovac |
| PI Surčin, Beograd – Surčin |
| PI Čika Jova Zmaj, Smederevska Palanka |
| **10** | 2022 | PI Lane, Kučevo | 6 | 30 | December 2022 |
| PI Marija Munćan, Majdanpek |
| PI Galeb, Petrovac na Mlavi |
| PI 14. oktobar, Malo Crniće |
| PI Majski cvet, Veliko Gradište |
| PI Lasta, Golubac |

1. **Reporting obligations**

Associate for Supporting Reflective Practice Development in Kindergartens as Part of the Professional Learning Community Model shall work under the supervision of and report directly to the Component 2 Coordinator and PMU Director. The activities of the Consultant shall be based on the quarterly work plan and the Consultant shall quarterly inform Component 2 Coordinator and PMU Director of the activities performed and submit invoices per the implemented cycle of support and SDPM for the groups of kindergartens they worked with.

1. **Consultants Qualification**

* University degree in pedagogy or psychology;
* At least 5 (five) years of relevant professional experience in preschool education;
* Thorough knowledge of the new Preschool Curriculum Framework (PCF);
* Participation in inclusive practice and policies projects and/or the possession of the professional development certificate in the area of inclusive education will be considered a plus;
* Experience in the application of digital technologies in the communication with colleagues in a PI;
* Knowledge of the reflective practice principles as a means of professional development of practitioners, and/or experience in running seminars on the topic, and/or scientific papers published on the topic, and/or the knowledge of the facilitation and support concept in professional learning (workshops held with participants) are preferable;
* Thorough knowledge of educational policies and the main initiatives in the area of preschool education is preferable;
* Professional development certificates from the area connected to ToR shall be considered an advantage;
* Participation in projects aimed at developing digital competencies of education system employees shall be considered a plus;
* Computer literacy (*MS Word*, *MS Excel*, *MS* *Power Point*, *Zoom*, *Microsoft Teams* and similar);
* Fluency in Serbian and good command of English;
* Proven team-work ability.

1. **Duration of the assignment**

The Consultant shall provide part-time services under the lump-sum contract, to be paid upon the presentation of the agreed deliverables. The estimated number of working days for the Consultant is up to 50 (fifty) work days (one work day equals 8 (eight) hours at the most) for the life of the project, i.e. until December 30, 2022, with the probation period of 6 (six) months. The expected start of services is September 2021.

**VI. Selection method**

The selection method is the Individual Consultant, 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).