**UNICEF Moldova**

**Terms of Reference**

**Individual Consultant for conducting training of mentors**

*(Both national and international are eligible to apply)*

**Location:** Home-based

**Duration and timeline:** **63 working days** (within a three-month period, March 2024 – June 2024)

1. **Background**

The Republic of Moldova embraces an education policy that is consistent with the European and international education standards that responds to the current issues and needs of the education system and its beneficiaries. The documents underpinning the strategic development of the education system are proof of the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Moldova to shift the focus on improving quality and sustainability of education.

Aligned with the objectives of the [Development Strategy “Education 2030”](https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=136600&lang=ro) (DS), the education system still faces challenges related to the quality of the professional development system for teachers. These include an absence of a well-defined training framework for curriculum designers, insufficient professional training for teachers in using new educational technologies, limited use of peer review among educational and managerial staff, and a lack of structured framework for implementing a mentoring system to support teachers. One of the key goals of the DS is to restructure human capital development mechanisms to align with the demands and needs of the labour market.

UNICEF Moldova, with the financial support of the European Union, supports the Ministry of Education and Research (MER) in implementing a comprehensive set of activities aimed at overcoming some of these challenges and achieve the goals of the DS. These activities are part of the Programme *Advancing Quality Education and Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All* and will contribute to human capital development in the Republic of Moldova, improving quality and relevance of education and lifelong learning opportunities, for better matching the labour market demands.

Among other objectives, the programme will focus on strengthening institutions and systems for teacher and school leaders' professional development. It will also aim to provide support for the effective implementation of education policies focused on the improvement of the overall quality of teaching and learning.

Strengthening the system of teachers’ professional development is an investment in the future of education and society. Despite ongoing advancements, the three components of teachers’ development, initial training, continuous training, and career development (including induction and progression) face challenges due to the following factors:

* Limited alignment between initial and ongoing training programmes and the individual professional development needs of teachers
* Improper mechanisms for professional integration and career progression
* Inadequate facilities for teachers to access training and career development for transitioning into the roles as mentors and trainers at regional, local, and central levels
* Low number of young teachers whose personal objective is to embrace the teaching profession
* Lack of a mechanism to monitor the relationship between the initial training, continuous development programmes and the actual level of implementation of newly acquired competences in the classroom. [[1]](#footnote-2)

The persistence of these factors contributes to the ongoing issues concerning the flow of information within the education system and the alignment of training with the actual needs of the system. Additionally, there is no institution responsible for bridging the gap between continuous training and the practical application of the skills acquired during both initial and ongoing training processes. The absence of coordination in the system hinders the effective implementation of Article 58 of the Education Code, specifically the aspects concerning various forms of mentoring.

Having a mentorship programme and a mentoring system, integrated into both initial and in-service training, and encompassing the entire process of monitoring, and disseminating the knowledge acquired by teachers during these training phases, will greatly support the overcoming of these challenges[[2]](#footnote-3).

Furthermore, within this mentorship system, it is important to equip teachers with the skills to evolve into mentors and/or mentor-trainers for their regions or institutions. This transition will attract initiatives for external investments and establishment of competitive training programmes, engaging the participation of top-tier educational staff to share their experiences, and to train other teachers to a similar standard. The aim is to also involve all teachers actively in more engaging and tailored continuous training programmes that align closely with their needs.

Within this framework, the MER established the National Institute for Education and Leadership (INEL) through the Government Decision Nr. 807 of 27.10.2023. The primary goal of INEL is to enhance education quality by reimagining and modernising both initial and in-service training for teachers and managers. This initiative emphasises two main aspects that have become immediate priorities:

* - Identifying and leveraging the expertise within educational institutions
* - Creating systemic opportunities by institutionalising the mentoring system

The institutionalisation of internship mentoring, work placement mentoring and professional development mentoring in the workplace, the creation of a network of mentor-trainers who are agents of change at national level with representatives in all the districts of our country, are all parts of this transformative change that will contribute to increasing the quality of education. The concept of mentorship was developed in early 2024 and is expected to progress with the training of 80 national and regional mentors, culminating in the subsequent training of 920 institutional mentor-trainers.

Based on the above, UNICEF Moldova will be seeking the technical assistance of international and/or national consultants to support the MER and INEL with the training of 80 mentors.

1. **Purpose of the assignment**

The consultant will support MER and INEL in establishing a national network of mentors by building a capacity of mentors as change agents in education that will support learning and help teachers and school leaders develop their potential.

1. **Objectives of the consultancy**

The consultants are expected to train 80 mentors (40 national mentors and 40 regional mentors) that will act as mentors and provide support for personal and professional development.

1. **Details of how the work should be delivered**

To enhance the quality of education by implementing and institutionalising practice mentoring, induction mentoring and workplace professional development mentoring, MER will conduct the selection of the first 80 mentors, based on the approved criteria of selection.

The preliminary selection criteria of mentors developed and applied by MER are:

a) minimum 5 years of teaching experience

b) the candidate is recognized as a professional within the community of teachers

c) the candidate has attained at least teaching grade II

d) the candidate has at least two years of experience as a trainer in local, district or national training activities and has contributed to the training and development of the teaching staff within his/her educational institution.

These 80 mentors will be trained to further fulfil the role of mentor-trainers for 920 teaching staff from over 300 general educational institutions. The training program for 80 mentors will include 75 hours of direct contact training and 225 hours of independent work, including the mentoring internship. The training programme will be based on the module *Praxeology of mentoring activity (80 mentors trained)*.

The training will be organised within a period of two weeks for each group of mentees, followed by an internship in educational institutions. During the internship, regular mentoring and guidance activities will be provided to all 80 mentors via online tools based on previously agreed mechanisms and timetable.

The consultants will ensure that the training programmes will adhere to a curriculum developed and implemented by consultants within different training programmes for mentors. The curricula methodology and structure will be initially endorsed by MER and INEL management.

The preliminary criteria for curriculum and implemented training programme relevance include:

* Number of trained mentors
* Degree of satisfaction of the trained mentors
* Degree of satisfaction with the provided handouts
* Participants degree of involvement in the training program
* Relevance of mentoring tools to be used by mentors in practice within their institutions

The evaluation of mentors after the completion of the training programme will be carried out during a one-day follow-up face to face session. The subsequent task involves the mentors engaging in self-assessment, evaluation, and certification activities. The evaluation methodology will be part of the mentoring programme package that will be endorsed by MER and INEL management.

1. **Deliverables and delivery dates**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Task** | **Deliverable** | **Expected timeline** |
| 1. | Develop an inception report on the methodologies of training the mentors, including the tools for identifying the training needs (short description) and the methodology of post-internship evaluation | Inception Report containing the methodology and tools | 4 days |
| 2. | Conducting induction sessions and dialogues involving the MER, INEL, and UNICEF to approve the curricula and methodology | MER endorsement of the  Curriculum for the Training Programmes and materials | 1 day |
| 3. | Training of mentors | Training delivered to 80 mentors on mentoring | up to 40 days |
| 4. | Develop the report on the results of the training programme | Report developed and submitted to MER and UNICEF | 2 days |
| 5. | Consulting and mentoring on-line sessions for the mentees during the mentoring internship | 1. Online sessions conducted  2. Report on the mentoring internship | 5 days  (0,5-hour x 80 mentors)  2 days |
| 6. | Conduct follow-up activities (self-evaluation, evaluation, and certification) | 1. Follow-up activities conducted  2. Report containing the main findings and recommendations | up to 5 days  2 days |
| 7. | Develop the Final Report | 1. Final report presented to MER and UNICEF  2. Summary report (up to 6 pages) in English  3. Summary of results in PPT in English | 2 days |
|  | Total |  | **63 days** |

*\* Exact deadlines will be mutually agreed upon contract signature.*

1. **Reporting requirements**

The consultants will report to the UNICEF Education Officer, with support from the Education Specialist, who will regularly communicate with the consultants and provide feedback and guidance on their performance and all other necessary support so to achieve objectives of the consultancy, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to their performance and quality of work.

All activities and deliverables undertaken by the consultants shall be discussed and planned in consultation with UNICEF. The consultants are expected to deliver each component of the workplan electronically (in Word format) and in English. At each stage, the deliverable shall be sent to the UNICEF Education Officer, with the INEL management in copy.

1. **Performance indicators for evaluation of results:**

The performance of work will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

* Completion of tasks specified in ToR
* Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables
* Quality of work
* Demonstration of high standards in cooperation and communication with UNICEF and counterparts

1. **Qualifications and experience**

* University degree in educational sciences
* Minimum 5 years of working experience in the relevant field
* Proven experience in developing training programmes for adults
* Proven experience in providing training programmes for mentors
* Experience of work with Governmental institutions, preferably in education is an asset
* Familiarity with international, EU and European Commission policies and benchmarks in education and best European practices in the field of education
* Previous work with UNICEF, other UN agencies, or the WB is an asset
* Fluency in Romanian and working knowledge of English is required

1. **Content of technical proposal**

* Relevant experience with similar type of assignments (max 300 words)
* Proposed approach and methodology (max 1500 words), including:
  + Timeline and milestones
  + Risk and mitigation measures
  + Ethical considerations and how the consultant will address them

Annex: Short Sample or links to related work previously conducted by the consultant.

In addition, please provide your Curriculum Vitae.

1. **Content of financial proposal**

The applicant should fill in the Financial Offer Template and specify an all-inclusive fee in USD, to complete the tasks/deliverables described in the Terms of Reference. Other expenses directly related to the ToR assignments and deliverables such as: (translation/interpretation costs, local transportation etc.) may be included in the financial offer unless specified that UNICEF will cover them separately (see paragraph 14 and 15 below).

The final selection will be based on the principle of “best value for money” i.e. achieving desired outcome at lowest possible fee.

If not provided by ToR, UNICEF will not reimburse costs not directly related to the assignment. This contract does not allow payment of off-hours, medical insurance, taxes, and sick leave.

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/output is incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet deadlines.

In case when a Moldovan resident is selected for contracting, MDL will serve as contract currency, converted at the UN exchange rate applicable at contract signature date.

1. **Evaluation criteria for selection**

The candidate is expected to reflect in the submission the qualifications, knowledge and experience related to the requirements listed above. Technical evaluation will be performed through a desk review of applications, evaluation of technical proposals, and if necessary, may be supplemented by an interview.

The total amount of points to be allocated for the price component is 30. The maximum number of points (30) will be allotted to the lowest price proposal of a technically qualified offer. Points for other offers will be calculated as Points (x) = (lowest offer/ offer x) \* 30.

The selection process is aimed at selecting the applicant who obtains the highest cumulative score (technical evaluation + financial offer evaluation points) following “best value for money” principle.

1. **Payment schedule**

 The payment will be linked to the following deliverables upon satisfactory completion and acceptance by UNICEF:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Deliverable (delivered according to the timeline agreed upon with UNICEF)** | **Proportion of payment** |
| Deliverable 1,2,3 | 30% |
| Deliverables 4,5,6,7 | 70% |

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/outputs are incomplete, not delivered for failure to meet deadlines.

1. **Definition of supervisory arrangements**

The consultants will work under the oversight of the Education Officer of UNICEF Moldova, in close coordination with the Education Specialist. Payments will be rendered upon successful completion of each task, as per the schedule outlined above.

1. **Work location and official travel involved**

The work will require 1 mission of up to 40 days to Chisinau to meet with the national stakeholders and 1 mission of up to 5 days for local travels in order to conduct in-person visits and interviews with the different local government authorities, as per their availability. The UNICEF office will facilitate introductions to key informants.

The consultants are expected to cover costs, arrange, and schedule such visits, including transportation. The UNICEF office will facilitate introductions to key informants. Consultants will make and pay for own international travel arrangements for arriving in Moldova including visa costs, insurance, any taxes etc.

The travel shall be based on economy class travel, regardless of the length of travel, subject to exceptional approval of business class travel by the Head of Office, for example for medical reasons when certified by UN Medical Services in New York.

The daily subsistence allowance (DSA) should not exceed fees as promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for Moldova Country Office.

1. **Support provided by UNICEF**

UNICEF will regularly communicate with the consultant/s and provide feedback and guidance and necessary support to achieve objectives of the work, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to the performance and quality of work. UNICEF will provide an initial package of relevant documents and available research, and an initial list of relevant experts and counterparts to work with. UNICEF will also request relevant data – as agreed upon with the consultant – from relevant government counterparts.

1. **Child Safeguarding**

Is this project/assignment considered as “[Elevated Risk Role](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/DocumentLibrary1/Guidance%20on%20Identifying%20Elevated%20Risk%20Roles_finalversion.pdf?CT=1590792470221&OR=ItemsView)” from a child safeguarding perspective?

   YES     NO           If YES, check all that apply:

**Direct contact role** YES       NO 

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

**Child data role** YES      NO 

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/SitePages/Amendments-to-the-Recruitment-Guidance.aspx) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/DocumentLibrary1/Child%20Safeguarding%20FAQs%20and%20Updates%20Dec%202020.pdf)

1. **Ethical considerations**

The Consultant will ensure that the process is in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines7. The consultant should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty while interacting with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Furthermore, the Contractor should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information. All participants should be informed about the context and purpose of the Assessment, as well as about the confidentiality of the information shared. The Contractor can use documents and information provided only for the tasks related to these terms of reference.

As per the [DHR PROCEDURE ON CONSULTANTS](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/portals/RF/Regulatory%20Framework%20Library/DHR%20Procedure%20on%20Consultants%20-%20DHR_PROCEDURE_2018_005.pdf), together with the Notification letter, the consultant will be sent the [link on UNICEF’s learning platform, Agora](https://agora.unicef.org/course/view.php?id=15620), containing UNICEF policies on Prohibiting and Combatting Fraud and Corruption; Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority and other relevant policies for their information and acknowledgment. The selected candidate must complete the applicable mandatory online courses on UNICEF’s learning platform prior to signature of contract.  All certificates should be presented as part of the contract.

1. **Other considerations**

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

The selected candidate is solely responsible to ensure that the visa (if applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract.

UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

1. (<https://gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/subiect-02-nu-719-mec-2023.pdf>) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc\_id=138940&lang=ro#](https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=138940&lang=ro) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)