

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS/CONTRACTORS

TITLE	Early Learning Standards Coordinator	
Requesting Section	Education	
Type of engagement	Consultant	
Selection method	Competitive selection [advertisement]	
Start/End date	29-Oct-23	30-Mar-25
Duration	17 months	
Duty Station	remotely	
Number of working days	236 days	
Terms of payment	Upon completion of each deliverable according to schedule	

Background:

For over two decades UNICEF has led global advocacy efforts and the provision of technical support to national governments, for the development and implementation of standards which define expected developmental and growth outcomes for young children and their caregivers. Early Childhood Education Standards are seen as a critical pre-condition within an enabling policy environment to support the provision of quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) services at scale and therein ensure school readiness.

In July 2023, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) in Ukraine appointed their first Deputy Minister for Pre-School Education in recognition of the importance of this education sub-sector. One of the immediate priorities for the MoES is the development of Early Childhood and Preschool Education Standards (ECPES), which is expected to articulate the following:

- mandatory competencies that young learners should attain during their early childhood education;
- categories of learning and developmental outcomes within specific domains, detailing what children should achieve at each stage of their early education journey;
- requirements for structuring the educational environment, ensuring that it is conducive to optimal learning, growth, and development for young learners.

It is expected that these ECPES will then allow for the MoES to bring the content of early childhood and preschool education in line with the European Quality Framework for Preschool Education and will ensure continuity between preschool and primary education systems by means of clearly outlined expectations in learning outcomes. Further, the development of these standards provides an important opportunity to demonstrate the priority of play and a ‘learning through action’ approach within early childhood education- therefore aligning with the broader New Ukrainian School reform efforts of the government. Lastly, the ECPES will allow for greater equity across the quality of preschool educational environments with the availability of normative standards which all early childhood education facilities will be expected to meet.

UNICEF Ukraine and the MoES have outlined a two-year comprehensive plan for their partnership in the early childhood education sub-sector, and within which the development of ECPES is a critical milestone.

Purpose of consultancy:

In order to ensure that an efficient, consultative process guides the development of the ECPES, the MoES has requested UNICEF support in the hiring of an individual consultant to be based within the Early Childhood Education Directorate. This individual consultant will coordinate the development of the ECPES and will oversee engagement with an institution who will be contracted separately by UNICEF to provide technical expertise for the ECPES. The individual consultant position is considered critical to support broad engagement and ownership of the ECPES across the MoES and to ensure that inputs from relevant stakeholders are considered throughout the process.

More specifically, the consultant will provide support in the following areas:

- Facilitate coordination of the MoES with the technical institution contracted to support development of the ECPES;
- Provide contextual information and analysis from Ukraine to guide the development of Early Childhood and Preschool Education Standard;
- Consolidate technical inputs during the drafting of the Early Childhood and Preschool Education Standards, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoES), UNICEF and other relevant education stakeholders;
- Assist in coordinating the involvement of various education stakeholders to ensure their active participation in the process;
- Support the development of advocacy efforts with stakeholders and relevant audiences on strengthening Early Childhood and Preschool Education systems;
- Provide technical assistance for reporting against the progress, learnings, constraints and solutions as part of the Early Childhood and Preschool Education Standard development.

Minimum requirements:	Education	Master's degree	An advanced university degree in a field relating to early childhood education is required.
	Professional experience	<p>A minimum of eight years of professional experience in planning and management of early childhood education interventions. Experience working at a strategic level across countries is required. Experience in standard development and implementation.</p> <p>Relevant experience in program development in Education within a UN agency or international aid organization is considered as an asset.</p>	
	Language	English	Advanced [C1]
		Ukrainian	Proficient/Native [C2]
	Skills and competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong analytical and strategic planning skills; • Program management skills; • Ability to communicate with a broad diversity of audiences and stakeholders; • Networking and partnership building; • Innovation, knowledge management and capacity building 	

Work assignment overview:

Expected Deliverables

It is expected that the consultant will provide UNICEF Ukraine and the Ministry of Education and Science with monthly reports which provide a summary of progress status of the consultancy deliverables.

Deliverable	Deadline	# of w/days
<p>1. Establishment of ECPES Working Group Approved ToR outlining role, accountabilities, and key milestones for ECPES Working Group alongside a confirmed membership list of ECPES Working Group.</p>	Nov 10 th 2023	5

2. Compilation of relevant analytical products/information sources Collection of Early Childhood Education related analytical and background documents to inform the ECPES process, stored in a common online platform.	December, 1 st ,2023	3
3. Development of an ECPES Implementation Plan A draft ECPES Implementation Plan with corresponding minutes of working group meetings, confirming approval of this.	December 15 th 2023	10
4. Consolidated feedback to draft ECPES Concept Note. Evidence of ECPES working group discussions on ECPES Concept Note as well as documentation of consultation meetings with relevant stakeholders. Feedback to cover the following aspects: Primary Education Standards & reform, EU Education Area principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care, European Council Recommendations on Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning, and international experience in the development of educational standards.	February 15 th ,2024	30
5. Consolidated feedback to first draft of ECPES ECPES Working Group feedback and MoES technical review on draft ECPES formally minuted.	September 1 st ,2024	80
6. Facilitate first public consultation process on draft ECPES Facilitate a public consultation process to document feedback on the draft ECPES as per Ukrainian legislative framework requirements.	October 1 st ,2024	14
7. Facilitate second public consultation process on revised ECPES Facilitate a public consultation process to document feedback on revised ECPES as per Ukrainian legislative framework requirements.	November15 th , 2024	14
8. Facilitate ECPES content and age validation Organise and facilitate MoES validation of ECPES (content/age) in sample number of sites and communities. Review Validation Report and consolidate feedback from ECPES Working Group to this.	February 15 th ,2025	60
9. Submission of final draft of ECPES Final draft of ECPES submitted by MoES to Cabinet of Ministers for review and approval. Ensure feedback from Cabinet of Ministers is documented and incorporated where relevant within revised ECPES.	March 30 th ,2025	20
Sub-total:		236

***Travel plan:**

Destination	Period <i>[month, year]</i>	Days
Dnipropetrovska oblast	December,2024	10
Chernihivska oblast	January, 2025	10
Zhytomyrska oblast	February,2025	10
Kyivska oblast	February, 2025	10
Total:		40

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.

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.

