**UNICEF Moldova**

**Terms of Reference**

**National Individual Consultant to develop a methodology and a study on the professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors, and school managers**

**Location:** Home-based

**Duration and timeline:** **36 working days** (within a two-month period, November 2024 – December 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. 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, 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 contribute to human capital development, improving quality and relevance of education and lifelong learning opportunities. Among other objectives, the programme focuses on strengthening institutions and systems for teacher, mentor and school leaders' professional development.

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
* 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)

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. At present, INEL in collaboration with the MER, with UNICEF support, has launched a program to train 80 national mentors. Upon earning their national mentor certification, these graduates will train 920 institutional mentors. As a result, at the end of 2024, 1,000 mentors will be active across 355 general education institutions nationwide. These mentors will drive pedagogical innovation and support teachers in developing their professional and personal skills throughout their careers. Thus, INEL is planning to develop a database on the professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors, and school managers from the 355 general education institutions selected for the National Mentoring Program. The activity will be extended by the INEL for all educational institutions.

Based on the above, UNICEF Moldova is seeking the technical assistance of a national consultant to conduct a study on teachers, mentors, and school managers' development needs**.**

1. **Purpose of the assignment**

The consultant will support MER and INEL in determining the personal and development needs of teachers, mentors, and school managers from the perspective of improving the learning outcomes. The study’s results will serve as a reference for decision-making regarding teacher training policies, for the re-design of initial and ongoing professional development programs for teachers and school managers, and the development of mentor training programs.

1. **Objectives of the consultancy**

* Carry out an analysis of international practices regarding the ways of determining the professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors, and school managers, which are applied in countries with modern models of teacher training (Finland, Estonia, Switzerland, Singapore)
* Carry out an analysis of local practices (355 schools) of determining the needs for professional and personal development of teachers, and school managers. It will inform decision-making at national, regional, institutional, and individual levels
* Develop and apply the *Methodology for determining the professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors, and school managers*
* Elaborate the *Study on professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors, and school managers* based on the result of the applied methodology

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

The methodology of the study will include a desk review of the national and international practices regarding the identification of training needs. The methodology will be based on the results of the desk review and will embed the most successful existing practices. The sets of tools for identifying the needs, and for processing and interpreting the results will be described in the methodology (surveys, interviews, etc.).

The online format for applying the methodology is recommended to effectively reach all 355 educational institutions, where the mentors are active. The consultancy will also imply country travel to at least 6 schools for the collection of data based on the analysis of young and experienced teachers' portfolios, school documentation (long-term projects, short-term projects, teaching tools, etc). The consultant will ensure the integration of gender equality and PSEA considerations, including safe and ethical protocols into the development of the methodology and study completion.

Once endorsed by MER and INEL and following the application in 355 schools, the *Methodology for determining the professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors and school managers* will become an effective tool that will help identify and prioritize needs at national, regional, institutional, and individual level.

The *Study on professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors, and school* will describe the aim and objectives, methodology, instruments, findings and results, conclusions, and recommendations following the application of the *Methodology for determining the professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors, and school managers*.The development needs of teachers, mentors, and school managers will be categorized into two types: professional and individual. The results will be presented separately for novice teachers, mentors, and experienced teachers/managers.

At the end, a comprehensive presentation of study’s outcomes and insights will be shared to stakeholders, facilitating informed decision-making.

**Considering the complexity of the consultancy, INEL will support the consultant through a dedicated team that will be providing the necessary support, including information and communication with schools and mentors, regional departments of education, school managers, approval of instruments and tools, support with data analysis, etc.**

1. **Deliverables and delivery dates**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Nr.** | **Task** | **Deliverable** | **Expected timeline** |
| 1. | * Conduct desk review and research of national and international trends * Draft *Methodology for determining the professional and personal development needs of teachers, mentors and school managers*   Draft an inception report | Inception Report containing   * Results of the desk review * Methodology and tools | 8 days |
| 2. | * Consult the methodology with MER, INEL and UNICEF and adapt the final methodology following the consultations * Apply the methodology | * Finalized detailed methodology and tools applied online to 355 schools * At least 6 visits to schools conducted | 2 days  12 days |
| 3. | Develop the *Study on professional and personal development needs (current and strategic) of teachers, mentors, and school managers* | Study developed in Romanian and presented to MER, INEL and UNICEF | 10 days |
| 4. | Validate the research results with MER, UNICEF other relevant stakeholders within a workshop | A PPT presentation / summary of key findings per area and per target group and related recommendations (in English and Romanian) | 2 days |
| 5. | Develop the Final Report | * Final report presented to MER and UNICEF * Summary report (up to 6 pages) in English * Summary of results in PPT in English | 2 days |
| **Total** | | | **36 days** |

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

1. **Reporting requirements**

The consultant will report to the UNICEF Education Officer, with support from the Education Specialist, who will regularly communicate with the consultant 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 consultant is expected to deliver each component of the workplan electronically (in Word format). 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 is required
* Minimum 5 years of working experience in the relevant fields (professional development programs, development of surveys and studies, management of education programs, research etc.) are required
* Proven experience in collecting and analysing data is required
* Experience in conducting desk reviews and research, including qualitative studies and baseline assessments, evaluations is required
* Demonstrated work experience in the education sector with national/international institutions/organizations is a strong asset
* Excellent verbal and written communications skills, both at technical level and policy level is required
* 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

Annexes:

* Sample or links to related work previously conducted by the consultant.
* Curriculum Vitae.

1. **Content of financial proposal**

The applicant should fill in the Financial Offer Template and specify an all-inclusive fee in MDL, 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.

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 | 50% |
| Deliverables 4,5 | 50% |

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 at least six 1-day local travels to schools in order to conduct in-person visits and interviews with the different educational stakeholders, 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.

1. **Support provided by UNICEF**

UNICEF will regularly communicate with the consultant 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 

1. **Ethical considerations**

The Consultant will ensure that the process is in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines[[2]](#footnote-3). 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 consultant 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 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. Consultants 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 health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract is 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. UNEG Guidelines <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/102> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)