

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Individual Consultant to develop the National Assessment Reference Framework Procurement Reference: MD-MOED-214220-CS-INDV

1. Background information on the project

Moldova Education Reform Project (MERP) is a World Bank-financed Project to be implemented, between April 2013 and April 2022.

The total cost of original credit is SDR 26.1 million (US\$ 40 million equivalent). The Additional Financing (AF) in the amount of SDR 7.1 million (US\$ 10 million equivalent) is provided to the Republic of Moldova in support of Moldova Education Reform Project.

The MERP supports the Government of Moldova (GoM) reform program by financing activities that will strengthen the quality of education and lead to a more efficient education sector. Through this Project, the World Bank supports the GoM in implementing the needed reforms, which include initiatives for:

- Improving learning conditions in targeted schools;
- Strengthening the education monitoring systems;
- Promoting efficiency reforms in the education sector.

MERP's focus is to support interventions that would lead to improvements in the quality and efficiency of primary and general secondary education. Specifically, the AF would allow the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR) to expand the coverage and depth of selected activities already initiated under MERP, such as teacher and school managers' training, participation in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), and development of an additional module to Education Management Information System (Technical and Vocational Education Training module) and roll-out of the preschool module.

The objective of the Project is to improve learning conditions in targeted schools and strengthen the Recipient's education monitoring systems, while promoting efficiency reforms in the education sector.

The MERP has three components:

- A. "Strengthening the Quality of Education",
- B. "Improving the Efficiency of the Education Sector"
- C. "Improving the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research's Capacity to Monitor the Reform".

Component A is divided into three sub-components: A.1, A.2 and A.3.

The objective of component A.1 is to contribute to the strengthening of the quality of education in the General Education subsector by improving systems in the following areas: school standards, teacher and school director training, student assessments, and data collection.

The objective of component A.2 is to contribute to the strengthening of the quality of education in the General Education subsector by rehabilitating and upgrading 17 receiving schools. The activities under component A.2 are carried out by the Moldova Social Investment Fund (MSIF).

The objective of component A3 is to contribute to the strengthening of the quality of education by supporting the following activities:

- a) providing selected schools with science and technology equipment.
- b) (i) developing in-depth special education modules and training teaching support staff and psycho-pedagogues working with students with disabilities or special educational needs; and (ii) providing special education teaching and learning materials, and selected equipment.

- c) (i) evaluating training programs for school managers and teachers established under Component A.1 (b) of the Project, and updating such programs; and (ii) training and evaluating a second cohort of school managers and teachers based on the updated training programs;
- d) supporting the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (previously was the National School Inspectorate, or any successor thereof acceptable to the Association, and the National Agency for Curriculum and Evaluation (or any successor thereof acceptable to the Association), to increase their respective capacities;
- e) supporting the design and implementation of mechanisms to address the gender, inclusiveness, and citizen engagement dimensions in education;
- f) (i) developing and incorporating a vocational education and training module into Moldova's Education Management Information System (EMIS); and (ii) training users on the use of EMIS.

In 2017, the National Curriculum Reference Framework was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research. Based on the policy framework presented in this document, there were elaborated and approved "Basic Curriculum: competences system for general education" (2018) and Curricula of school subjects (2019).

In order to ensure the quality of education, it is necessary to adjust the existing national assessment practices to the National Curriculum Reference Framework. The National Assessment Framework also should take into account the best national assessment practices from other countries.

In this context, Ministry of Education, Culture and Research intends to hire an individual consultant to support the Ministry and the National Agency for Curriculum and Evaluation (NACE) in development of the National Assessment Reference Framework.

2. Objective of the assignment

The objective of the proposed mission is to develop the National Assessment Reference Framework, in line with national curricular policies and relevant national assessment practices applied in other countries.

3. Scope of Work

In order to achieve the objective, the consultant shall perform the following tasks:

Task 1. Develop the concept of the National Assessment Reference Framework.

The concept should be developed based on the results of the analysis of compliance of the current national exams practices with the National curriculum Reference Framework and other curricular products, developed after 2017. Also, the concept should take into account the best national assessment practices from other countries. The developed concept will be submitted for approval to the NACE and the MoECR.

Task 2. Develop the National Assessment Reference Framework based on the structure approved by MoECR.

The National Assessment Reference Framework should describe at least:

- theoretical foundations regarding the assessment as an integral part of the educational system;
- methodological foundations for designing and organizing the assessment process of the curricular finalities for primary, secondary and high school education;
- description of the role and basic components of the examination programs for the school subjects within the national exams at the end of primary, secondary and high school education.

The consultant will inform regularly the MoECR, NACE and MERP team about the achieved results and any difficulties arisen during implementation.

4. Deliverables

The consultant shall submit to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR) the following deliverables:

- a) Report on the task 1, which includes at least:
 - analysis of compliance of the current national exams' practices with the National Curriculum Framework and other curricular products developed after 2017
 - analysis of the national exams' practices in other countries,
 - proposals on the structure and content of the National assessment framework.
- b) National Assessment Reference Framework, which includes at least:
 - theoretical foundations regarding the assessment as an integral part of the educational system;
 - methodological foundations for designing and organizing the assessment process of the curricular finalities for primary, secondary and high school education;
 - description of the role and basic components of the examination programs for the school subjects within the national exams at the end of primary, secondary and high school education.

The deliverables shall be developed in Romanian and shall be submitted electronically and in hard-copy.

5. Qualification requirements and basis for evaluation (evaluation criteria)

The Consultant should meet the following minimum requirements:

- a university degree (at least Master or equivalent) in sociology, education studies, psychology or related fields;
- proven experience in school results assessment at national level and / or experience in analysis of school results of national or international assessments;
- proven experience in elaboration of policy papers for educational system of the Republic of Moldova;
- excellent knowledge of the educational system of Moldova;
- work experience with international projects would be an asset;
- excellent writing skills in Romanian;
- working knowledge of Russian and English;
- experience with Microsoft Office package (Word, Excel, Power Point, etc.)

6. Duration of the assignment estimated time input

This consultancy is expected to begin in February 2021 and be completed by September 30, 2021, with the deliverables submitted as follow:

Deliverables	Submission Deadline	Approval by
Report on the task 1, which includes at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analysis of compliance of the current national exams practices with the National Curriculum 	May, 14 2021	National Agency for Curriculum and Evaluation and Ministry of Education, Culture and Research

<p>Framework and other curricular products developed after 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analysis of the national exams' practices in other countries, - proposals on the structure and content of the National Assessment Framework 		
<p>National Assessment Reference Framework, which includes at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - theoretical foundations regarding the assessment as an integral part of the educational system; - methodological foundations for designing and organizing the assessment process of the curricular finalities for primary, secondary and high school education; - description of the role and basic components of the examination programs for the school subjects within the national exams at the end of primary, secondary and high school education. 	September, 15 2021	National Agency for Curriculum and Evaluation and Ministry of Education, Culture and Research

Approximate number of working days is 70.

7. Payment process

Payment will be made in two stages after submission and approval of the deliverables by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research.

8. Institutional Arrangements

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the National Agency for Curriculum and Evaluation. MERP team will oversee the process of consulting services.

The MoECR will provide the Consultant with all Project documents deemed necessary for assignment accomplishment.

Confidentiality statement: All data and information received from MoECR for the purpose of this assignment is to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to MoECR. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization of the MoECR.