

TERMS OF REFERENCE

for consulting services to conduct a study to review a sample of textbooks from the perspective of preventing discrimination and promoting equality

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 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.

2. Objective of the assignment

The objective of the assignment is to review and evaluate textbooks from the perspective of preventing discrimination and promoting equality. The results of the study will be used to improve the quality of textbooks used in the Republic of Moldova.

3. Scope of work

In order to achieve the objective, the Consultant shall perform the following tasks.

Task 1. Develop the methodology for conducting a study to review textbooks from the perspective of preventing discrimination and promoting equality. The methodology will be based on the international and national normative acts in the field of combating discrimination and promoting equality. The methodology will contain tools for review and evaluation of textbooks based on 5 criteria¹:

1. discrimination based on sex / gender;
2. discrimination on the basis of disability;
3. discrimination on the basis of language / ethnicity / race;
4. discrimination based on religion or belief;
5. age discrimination, [LC1][SL2]

The consultant will provide arguments for selection of a sample of textbooks that will be reviewed and evaluated in order to apply the methodology, to provide relevant conclusions and to serve as an example for the analysis of all types of textbooks.

The consultant will annex to Methodology the activity plan for conducting the study, indicating timelines and intermediary deliverables obtained as a result of carrying out these activities.

¹ The most frequently criteria invoked in the complaints submitted to the Council for prevention and elimination of discrimination and ensuring equality. [http://egalitate.md/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Raport_CPEDAE_2019 - FINAL.pdf](http://egalitate.md/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Raport_CPEDAE_2019_-_FINAL.pdf) page 60

Task 2. Apply the Methodology approved by the MoECR and develop the final report on study results. In the process of carrying out the study, the consultant will regularly inform the MoECR and the MERP team about the progress or possible difficulties.

The final report shall include at least:

1. description of the process for conducting the study, including the used tools (elaborated methodology);
2. conclusions on the results of analysis, disaggregated by 5 analysis criteria;
3. recommendations for the MoECR, textbooks authors, publishers regarding preventing discrimination and promoting equality in textbooks with special focus on sex/gender. [LC3][SL4]

4. Deliverables and due dates

This consultancy is expected to last 4 months starting in March 2021, with the deliverables submitted as follow:

The Consultant shall submit to the MoECR the following deliverables:

Deliverables	Submission Deadline	Approval by
a) The Methodology for conducting a study to review textbooks from the perspective of preventing discrimination and promoting equality, including the evaluation tools based on 5 criteria <u>presented above in Task 1;</u> [FK5]	4 weeks from contract signing	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research
b) The final report on study results. The Report will contain at least: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. description of the process for conducting the study, including the used tools; 2. conclusions on the results of analysis, disaggregated by 5 analysis criteria; 3. recommendations for the MoECR, textbooks authors, publishers regarding preventing discrimination and promoting equality in textbooks. 	16 weeks from contract signing	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research

The deliverables shall be developed in both Romanian and English languages and shall be submitted electronically (MS Office) and in hard-copy.

Approximate number of working days is 40.

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

The Consultant should meet the following minimum requirements:

- a university degree (at least Master) in law, sociology, education studies or related fields;
- at least 7 years of experience in the area of human rights protection and prevention of discrimination;
- experience in elaboration and conducting at least 3 researches on discrimination based on the gender bias, disabilities, ethnical/linguistic and other criteria;
- experience in textbooks review would be an asset;
- good knowledge of the educational system of Moldova;
- work experience with international projects would be an asset;
- excellent writing skills in Romanian; good knowledge of English and Russian
- experience with Microsoft Office package (Word, Excel, Power Point, etc.)

6. Institutional arrangements

The consultant will report to the Project Executive Director and the Head of the General Education Division of the MoECR. The MERP team will oversee the process of consulting services and will support the General Education Division in the process of analysing the deliverables provided by the firm.

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

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