

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consulting Services

to update/revise training program for teachers, developed in 2016, based on training evaluation and to convert the training program in a remote learning course

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.

During 2016-2017, a new training program for teachers was developed and piloted. The new training program for teachers has been implemented based on defined professional competence standards for teachers, which cover the whole teaching-learning-evaluation activity and are grouped in 5 main domains: 1. *Learning design and preparation*; 2. *Learning environment*; 3. *Teaching – learning – evaluation process*; 4. *Professional development*; 5. *School-family-community relationship*

The MERP-AF continues to improve teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills and school management's managerial and leadership skills. While the original credit supported the development and roll out of a teachers' training program covering about 10 percent of teachers, the Additional Financing supports a formative evaluation to review that training program with the purpose of further enhancing it - including developing and adding awareness modules on community, gender, and inclusive education for students with special needs and/or disabilities and expanding its coverage by training approximately 2,500 additional teachers, that is covering another 10 percent of teachers.

Thus, from April to August 2019, „Magenta Consulting” company hired by the MoECR evaluated the training program for teachers implemented in 2016-2017 and submitted to the MoECR the *Conclusions and Recommendations for the adjustment / improvement of the teacher training program based on the professional competence standards for teachers in the general education*.

At the same time, „Gender Center” company hired by the MoECR, evaluated and developed aspects of community, gender and inclusion awareness modules to be incorporated into teacher and school managers training program.

The evaluation results showed that the training program mainly meets the needs of teachers, therefore, according to the MoECR, the company that developed the training program should analyze and improve them, considering the recommendations presented in the evaluation reports and the latest changes in the educational policy.

In the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, MoECR has decided to change the training strategy: from traditional training (face-to-face teaching in the common physical space) to remote learning.

In this context, the MoECR intends to hire a company to update/revise the teachers training program, based on conclusions and recommendations provided by evaluators, and to convert the updated training program in a remote learning course.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The objective of the assignment is to support the MoECR in updating / revising existing in-service training program for teachers, based on the recommendations proposed in the evaluation reports and to convert the training program in a remote learning course.

3. Scope of Work

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

Task 1. Analyze the results of evaluation. The firm will analyze: (i) evaluation report, conclusions and recommendations for the adjustment / improvement of the teachers' training program based on the professional competence standards for teachers in the general education and (ii) evaluation report, conclusions and recommendations related to community, gender and inclusion awareness aspects, (iii) good practices in the organization of the remote learning process from the perspective of the professional competence standards and (iv) any other relevant existing documents that may relate to the trainings in reference.

Also, in order to clarify certain aspects of the recommendations, the firm will organize a remote workshop with representatives of MoECR and experts who carried out the evaluation. During workshop the firm will present:

- a concept of the course design (expected results, main activities and contents which reflect conclusions and recommendations provided by evaluators),
- advantages and limits of the recommended platform(s) / software for remote course.

Task 2. Update / revise the training program consisting of 5 modules and transform it into a remote learning course. Based on the activities carried out in Task 1, the firm will adjust previously developed information materials, develop new training materials, develop specific tasks for remote learning and develop the competency certification test. The competency certification test will include the *pre*- and *post*- evaluation questionnaire and tasks that require the use of specific competencies.

At the end of the updating process, in order to ensure transparency and accuracy of the changes, the firm will organize a second remote workshop with MoECR's representatives and experts who carried out the evaluation. During workshop the firm will present:

- brief description of the elaborated remote course (expected results, main activities and contents, evaluation tools, expected time-schedule etc.);
- adjusted materials, incorporated in presented course.

After the approval of the updated materials, the firm will translate all the course materials and the competency certification test in Russian.

The most important features of the distance learning course will be:

- it will include five learning modules, which reflect five areas of the professional competence standards for teachers;
- each module will contain: (i) theoretical information for independent study (presented in texts, video / audio presentations, etc.), (ii) practical tasks for individual or group work and (iii) evaluation tests;
- it will include presentation of main principles and some practical suggestions for organization of remote learning educational process;
- it will include pre- and post-evaluation tests in order to assess dynamics of participants' competencies; based on the evaluation results, it will be possible to make decision on the certification of participants;

- it will include independent learning activities (asynchronous) and synchronous learning activities (webinars and video conferences);
- the estimated time for independent learning activities is 40 hours;
- the time reserved for synchronous learning activities will not exceed 4 hours per day and 20 hours in total;
- all training materials (texts, presentations, learning tasks, assessment tests, etc.) will be accessible in Romanian and Russian.

The remote learning course will be placed on a platform, identified by the firm based on the following criteria:

- it is free;
- it offers a set of tools appropriate to the specifics of the course;
- it is user-friendly (the minimum requirements for equipment, soft and users' digital competences)

Task 3. Develop methodological suggestions for trainers, which will facilitate this course. Suggestions will describe:

- remote learning platform tools;
- methods and tools for using the proposed informative materials;
- methods and tools for monitoring the learning process;
- methods and tools for evaluating results;
- methods, tools and tips used by the trainer(s) for providing individual consultancy and feedback to participants;
- methods for facilitating webinars and video conferences;
- other relevant suggestions.

The methodological suggestions will be submitted in Romanian and Russian.

Task 4. Training of trainers. The company will conduct a remote learning workshop for 30 trainers, selected by MoECR. The scope of the workshop is to improve trainers' competences in using digital tools proposed for the remote learning course. At the end of the training, the company will apply a competency test to support MoECR in certifying skills of trainers to provide training to teachers.

4. Deliverables and due dates

This consultancy is expected to last 3.5 months starting in October 2020, with the deliverables submitted as follow:

Deliverables	Submission Deadline	Approval by
a) Updated training program for teachers, designed in a free distance learning platform according to the specific characteristics listed under the Task 2. All learning materials (texts, presentations, learning tasks, assessment tests) will be accessible in Romanian and Russian.	8 weeks from contract signing	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research

b) Methodological suggestions for trainers, who will facilitate this course according to the requirements presented under Task 3. The methodological suggestions will be submitted in Romanian and Russian.	12 weeks from contract signing	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research
c) Report on the training of trainers performed, including test results on implemented changes in trainers' competencies. The report will be submitted in Romanian.	14 weeks from contract signing	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research

All deliverables shall be submitted in electronic format (MS Office).

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

Minimum requirements for the firm:

- At least 3 remote training programs (including curriculum, information materials, practical tasks, initial and final assessment tests) for educational staff developed and implemented in the last 5 years;
- The implementation team should include: expert(s) in education / in-services training for teachers and expert in elaboration of remote learning courses.

Minimum requirements for key team members:

Expert(s) in education / in-services training for teachers. Responsible for updating existing materials based on the results of evaluation, developing new materials (presentations, tests, etc.), converting the training program in the distance learning course and elaborating of the methodological suggestions for trainers. Also, the expert in educational will assume the responsibilities of team leader such as coordination of the team activities carried out under the assignment and submission of all reports:

- Advanced degree (masters or higher desirable) in pedagogy, education policy or related fields;
- At least 7 years of practical working in the education sector;
- Experience in leading teams to develop and to deliver in-service training programs for teachers;
- Experience in implementing remote learning programs would be an advantage;
- Excellent technical writing skills in Romanian;
- Good knowledge of English and Russian (both written and oral) would be an advantage.

Expert in elaboration of remote learning courses – responsible for the design of the course, placement of materials, elaboration of suggestions for trainers:

- University degree (Masters or higher would be an asset) in education or ICT;
- Experience in developing at least 5 distance learning courses (courses developed individually or in cooperation with other specialists);
- Experience in delivering training programs / in elaboration of tutorials for trainers how to use web applications for distance learning;
- Good knowledge of Romanian and Russian languages;
- Knowledge of English would be an advantage.

6. Institutional arrangements

The firm 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 firm with all Project documents deemed necessary for assignment accomplishment.

Confidentiality statement: MoECR will provide the company all documents required for this assignment, including initial training module, results of first wave of trainings evaluation, reports on trainings content evaluation and additional modules to be included etc. 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.