

TERMS OF REFERENCE

National Consultant to support modelling inclusive schools and implementing capacity building activities

CONTRACT MODALITY Individual Consultancy

DUTY STATION Tashkent, Uzbekistan, remote

DURATION OF CONTRACT 13 months

Purpose of Assignment

Background. Within the framework of the SmartED Project funded by the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the Arab Coordination Group (ACG), and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNICEF, in collaboration with the Government of Uzbekistan, is supporting national efforts to strengthen an inclusive education system in which every child can access quality education, participate meaningfully in learning and school life, and achieve their full potential. As part of this support, UNICEF is assisting the development and operationalization of the *Inclusive Education Strategy of Uzbekistan* (the “Strategy”). The Strategy defines a shared vision and strategic directions for developing inclusive education systems and classrooms, and provides for a clear set of standards, requirements, processes and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to be institutionalized and to contribute to the revision of the existing legislative framework.

A critical component of this work is strengthening the national pool of specialists equipped to lead and sustain inclusive education reforms. This requires the development and alignment of professional standards, competency frameworks, qualification requirements and structured professional development programmes that connect theoretical knowledge with classroom practice, school-based implementation and mentoring. A key priority is to support the integration of inclusive education competencies and approaches into both pre-service teacher education at pedagogical universities and the in-service teacher professional development system.

The process involves modelling inclusive education in 11 inclusive hub schools selected across 10 regions. The hub schools serve as resource centres and testing grounds for innovative inclusion models and for scaling up good practices. They test and refine approaches at the school, classroom and individual learner levels, applying a Whole School Approach guided by three key dimensions: *Access, Participation and Achievement*. The experience and evidence generated will inform the development and refinement of implementation tools, mechanisms and SOPs, as well as professional standards for special educators and the integration of inclusive education competencies into existing professional standards for schoolteachers and early childhood educators. This work is intended to support the wider adoption and scaling of effective inclusive education practices nationwide.

Purpose of the consultancy. To ensure effective coordination, localization, and field-level implementation, UNICEF seeks an international consultant for the period January 2027 – January 2028 to provide continuous technical and coordination support, as well as serve as a resource person and trainer for teachers and school staff in inclusive hub schools, facilitating the practical application of inclusive education approaches, and strengthen the Community of Practice (CoP) and peer mentoring network among these schools.

The consultant will work closely with national stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), the National Agency for Social Protection (NASP), relevant national institutions and the model schools, to support coherent implementation of the Strategy at the system, school, classroom and individual learner levels. The consultancy will also provide technical guidance on localization, adaptation, and implementation of the Inclusive Education Strategy, including related standards, tools, and training materials. The consultant will also facilitate the

delivery of regional webinars, practicums, and training sessions on inclusive pedagogy and assistive technologies, in close collaboration with international consultants and national stakeholders.

Objectives:

The objectives of the consultancy are to:

1. Contextualize, adapt and support the piloting of inclusive education standards, guidelines, SOPs and implementation tools for use within the education system of Uzbekistan.
2. Co-develop and contextualize the Advanced Professional Capacity Building Programme on Inclusive Education, including the adaptation and translation of training materials into Uzbek.
3. Serve as a principal national trainer for the delivery of programme modules and related capacity-building activities.
4. Support the practical application, testing and refinement of inclusive education tools and approaches in the 11 inclusive hub schools.
5. Strengthen the functioning of School Inclusion Teams and support schools in applying whole-school approaches to identifying and addressing barriers to learning and participation.
6. Facilitate the establishment and functioning of a Community of Practice and peer mentoring network among the 11 inclusive hub schools.
7. Document implementation experience, consolidate feedback and lessons learned, and provide recommendations for improving and scaling up inclusive education approaches.

Scope of Work

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The assignment is expected to start in January 2027 and to continue until the end of January 2028. The consultant is expected to:

1. Contextualization and Adaptation of Inclusive Education Frameworks, SOPs and Tools

- Work with the international consultants and UNICEF to review relevant implementation frameworks, standards, guidelines, SOPs and practical tools, contextualize and adapt these resources to the national education system, relevant legislation and regulations, institutional arrangements, professional roles, school structures and implementation capacities in Uzbekistan.
- Identify implementation gaps, ambiguities and potential barriers to the practical application of the tools and propose contextually appropriate solutions in consultation with the international consultants.
- Support the adaptation and translation of agreed materials into Uzbek, ensuring consistency of terminology, clarity of instructions and alignment with national education terminology and UNICEF's inclusive education approach.
- Facilitate the review and validation of adapted resources with relevant stakeholders and incorporate agreed feedback.

2. Co-development and Contextualization of the Advanced Professional Capacity Building Programme

- Support in developing and refining the structure, content and delivery arrangements of the Advanced Professional Capacity Building Programme on Inclusive Education.
- Adapt programme content to the professional responsibilities and learning needs of teachers, special educators, school leaders, trainers and other relevant education professionals in Uzbekistan.

- Translate or coordinate the translation of agreed programme materials into Uzbek, including presentations, facilitator guides, participant handouts, case studies, practical assignments and supporting resources.
- Ensure consistency between the programme's technical content, training materials, practical activities and expected competencies.
- Collaborate with the international consultants to review participant assignments, reflections, school-based practice and feedback to identify areas requiring additional explanation or support.
- Recommend improvements to the programme based on participant feedback, observed practice and implementation evidence.

3. Delivery of Training and National Capacity-Building Activities

- Prepare training materials, facilitation notes and practical activities in accordance with the agreed programme design.
- Deliver assigned programme modules and training sessions for teachers, special educators, trainers from Pedagogical Excellence Centres and other designated participants. Facilitate interactive learning, case-based discussions, collaborative problem-solving, classroom scenarios and practical exercises that connect programme concepts with participants' professional practice.
- Support participants in applying learning through school-based assignments, classroom observations, focused evidence collection, reflection and implementation tasks.
- Collect and analyse participant feedback, attendance records, training evaluations and evidence of learning. Identify recurring capacity gaps and recommend adjustments to training content, facilitation methods and follow-up support.

4. Piloting and Refinement of Tools and Approaches in the 11 Inclusive Hub Schools

- Work with the international consultants, UNICEF and school teams to develop a practical plan for piloting selected tools, procedures and implementation approaches.
- Support school leaders and School Inclusion Teams in understanding and applying relevant standards, SOPs, self-assessment tools, observation approaches, school improvement planning instruments and other agreed resources.
- Identify practical challenges in applying the tools, including issues relating to terminology, usability, professional roles, institutional procedures and available resources. Provide structured feedback to the international consultants on the feasibility, clarity and usefulness of the tools and recommend contextually appropriate adjustments. Facilitate the collection of feedback from school leaders, teachers, special educators, learners and families, as appropriate and in accordance with safeguarding and ethical requirements.
- Support the documentation of how tools are used in practice, what changes are required and which approaches demonstrate potential for broader application.

5. Strengthening Schools and Community of Practice

- Support School Inclusion Teams in clarifying their roles, responsibilities and ways of working in line with the agreed national framework and school-level procedures. Support schools in translating identified barriers into practical, achievable actions with clear responsibilities and follow-up arrangements.
- Develop, in consultation with UNICEF and the international consultants, a practical plan for the functioning of the Community of Practice and peer mentoring network. Support the development and dissemination of practical resources and case examples emerging from the hub schools.
- Organize or support peer-learning meetings, online discussions, thematic sessions, school visits and other agreed knowledge-sharing activities. Support peer mentoring arrangements that enable schools and education professionals to learn from one another and strengthen implementation capacity.
- Contribute to strengthening the capacity of hub schools to support other schools in their regions through professional exchange and sharing of practical experience.

6. Monitoring, Documentation, Reporting and Technical Coordination

- Prepare an detailed workplan, including activities, timelines, expected outputs, coordination arrangements and proposed regional missions.
- Prepare progress updates and deliverable reports in accordance with UNICEF requirements.
- Coordinate and supervise the work of regional mentors to ensure alignment of all activities across model schools.
- Consolidate lessons learned from training participants, school-level implementation and Community of Practice activities. Provide evidence-based recommendations for improving the usability, implementation and sustainability of inclusive education tools and approaches.

- Contribute to the preparation of practical implementation guidance, case studies and other knowledge products as agreed with UNICEF.
- Provide technical guidance and ongoing consultation to UNICEF, the Ministry of Preschool and School Education, and national institutions to ensure quality, coherence, and sustainability, and to support alignment with broader inclusive education and early childhood development reforms.

Management and reporting:

National Consultant will work under direct supervision of Education Specialist and work in daily coordination with the Education Officer and International Consultants, as well as in cooperation with national stakeholders MoPSE, and local education authorities.

The consultant will provide regular progress updates and coordinate all consultations, missions and deliverables with UNICEF and the relevant national counterparts. All deliverables, as set out in the table of deliverables below, are subject to review and approval by UNICEF before payment.

- **Duration of assignment:** 160 days (January 2027 – January 2028).

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
1. Contextualization and Adaptation of Inclusive Education Frameworks, SOPs and Tools 1.1 Inception and technical coordination	Deliverable 1.1: Brief inception report, including: (a) detailed workplan; (b) deliverable schedule and milestones; (c) proposed regional missions;	31 January 2027
1.2. Contextualization of the Inclusive Education Strategy, frameworks, SOPs and tools	Deliverable 1.2: Contextualized package of inclusive education frameworks, standards, SOPs and practical tools, developed jointly with the international consultants. Includes: (a) review of relevant national legislation, policies and institutional arrangements; (b) identification of implementation gaps and proposed solutions; (c) adaptation of school-, classroom- and individual-level tools; and (d) recommendations for national validation and implementation.	31 August 2027; drafts submitted progressively from February 2027
1.3. Translation, adaptation and validation of technical resources	Deliverable 1.3: Uzbek-language versions of agreed frameworks, SOPs, guidelines and tools, including consistent national terminology, clear instructions and contextual examples. Includes a consolidated record of stakeholder feedback and revisions following technical review and validation.	31 October 2027; materials submitted progressively

2. Co-development and contextualization of the Advanced Professional Capacity Building Programme	Deliverable 2.1: Contextualized Advanced Professional Capacity Building Programme package, including: (a) adapted modules and facilitator guides; (b) presentations, participant handouts, case studies and practical assignments; (c) school-based practice and reflection tasks; (d) evaluation tools and feedback mechanisms; and (e) recommendations for integrating inclusive education competencies into pre-service and in-service teacher education.	30 September 2027; drafts submitted progressively from February 2027
3. Delivery of training and national capacity-building activities	Deliverable 3.1: Delivery of assigned training modules and capacity-building activities in coordination with the international consultants. Includes: (a) preparation and delivery of training sessions; (b) facilitation of practical exercises and case-based discussions; (c) support for participants' school-based assignments and reflections; (d) consolidated attendance, evaluation and participant feedback records; and (e) recommendations for improving programme content and delivery.	31 December 2027; reports submitted after each training cycle
4. Piloting and refinement of tools in the 11 inclusive hub schools	Deliverable 4.1: School piloting and refinement report, including: (a) implementation of the agreed piloting plan; (b) structured feedback from school leaders, teachers, special educators and School Inclusion Teams; (c) documented usability and implementation challenges; (d) recommendations for revising tools, SOPs and guidance; and (e) examples of promising practices from the 11 hub schools.	30 December 2027; findings documented progressively
5. Strengthening School Inclusion Teams and the Community of Practice	Deliverable 5.1: Community of Practice and peer mentoring implementation package, including: (a) a practical engagement and peer-learning plan for the 11 hub schools; (b) clarified roles and responsibilities for School Inclusion Teams; (c) documented peer-learning activities	30 November 2027; findings documented progressively

	and mentoring arrangements; (d) practical case examples and resources for knowledge-sharing; and (e) recommendations for strengthening hub schools' role as regional resource centres.	
6.1. Monitoring, documentation and final reporting	Deliverable 6.1: Final technical report covering: (a) activities and outputs delivered against the approved workplan; (b) coordination and technical support provided to UNICEF, national counterparts and regional mentors; (c) consolidated findings from training and school implementation; (d) lessons learned and evidence-based recommendations; and (e) proposed actions for sustainability, institutionalization and further scaling-up.	31 January 2028

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of 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.

Important Notes

- 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.
- Contracts are conditional upon the selected candidate’s willingness to comply with any current or future vaccination requirements that may be established by UNICEF, where applicable. Failure to comply with applicable vaccination requirements, where required and without an approved medical exemption by UNICEF, may result in the withdrawal of the consultancy offer or termination of the contract in accordance with the General Terms and Conditions of 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.

QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES (CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

- Minimum requirements:

Education: Master’s degree or higher in education, psychology or a related field. A PhD is an asset and is scored higher in the technical evaluation.

Years of Experience/ Knowledge/ Expertise/ Skills required*:

Work Experience:

- More than 5 years of professional and relevant experience in education, preferably in inclusive education, teacher training/capacity development.
- Professional experience and expert knowledge in designing teaching and learning materials and providing capacity building activities;
- Good analytical and writing skills.
- Excellent written and spoken skills in English, Uzbek and Russian.

Language Requirements:

- Excellent written and spoken Uzbek and Russian, preferably English.

Knowledge/ Expertise/ Skills:

- Professional experience and expert knowledge in blended teachers’ professional development design; designing teaching and learning materials on inclusive education and personalized learning; inclusive lesson planning; and assessment for learning.

- Proven ability to design professional development and teaching and learning materials on inclusive education, with a focus on student-centred pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Good knowledge of the education system in Uzbekistan, with particular focus on inclusive education.