

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Technical Support International Consultant – Quality Assurance of National Curriculum, TLM Guidance, Capacity Building and Assessment Reform

CONTRACT MODALITY Individual Consultancy

DUTY STATION Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan, Remote with travel

DURATION OF CONTRACT 24 months

Purpose of Assignment

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 has been supporting the Ministry of Pre-school and School Education working with Cambridge University & Press in the development of a new National Curriculum Framework (NCF), comprising Curriculum Content and Educational Standards for Grades 1-11 and all subjects. This is a good opportunity to review policy on teaching-learning materials (TLMs), ensuring that this policy is based on the same rationale as the new NCF. According to the Partnership Compact for Education Reform 2023-2026, there should be a Guidance for producing/adapting of TLMs (TLM Guidance). The Guidance will guide the national education system in determining the most appropriate mix of these approaches to ensure the availability of NCF-aligned, competency-based, inclusive, and gender-transformative TLMs.

An integrated approach that aligns curriculum and teaching-learning materials (TLM) to promote positive teaching practices is essential for future reforms to succeed. For this reason, TLM quality assurance guidelines and tools will be developed as part of a Quality Assurance Framework for Developing TLMs, along with criteria for their assessment, adaptation, and selection. The combination of a new curriculum and new policy on teaching-learning materials has the potential to be a powerful force for change that can be aligned with a review of the approach to teacher education.

The national system has expressed priority for developing competency-based TLMs, especially focusing on subjects in which TLMs have not been updated and are not planned to be updated by ongoing initiatives. Capacity building programme for authors developing new TLMs, including digital solutions, will be delivered including through regular meetings with each subject TLM group to provide continuous technical guidance, feedback, and content review at each stage of TLM development applying a learning-by-doing methodology.

As revised TLMs are urgently needed in schools, they will be tested in an ongoing way as part of the process of development, with results of the test informing further TLM development in real-time. The process of TLM improvement will continue being informed through ongoing field evidence collection at the time of implementation of the newly developed TLMs in schools nationwide.

Scope of Work:

While UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) and the Republican Scientific-Methodological Center for the Development of Education (RSMCDE), has engaged an international consultancy company (IC) to support (1) the development of the Framework for Gender Transformative and Inclusive Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs), including digital solutions, and the delivery of a capacity building programme for TLM authors; and (2) the development and delivery of capacity building on Assessment Reform, the work also requires additional, independent expertise from an international consultant in order to:

- Undertake a structural review of the current context, and develop an associated roadmap, to guide work on Curriculum and TLM Reform and Reform of the National Assessment System;
- Develop, in collaboration with the Government of Uzbekistan, clear quality criteria for the appraisal of work undertaken on Curriculum Reform, and Reform of the National Assessment System; and
- Maintain Quality Assurance of the Curriculum Reform, and Reform of the National Assessment System, as undertaken by the Ministry with support from an institutional consultancy supplier, in accordance with the aforementioned quality criteria and developed methodology.

Objectives

- 1) Ensure that the work conducted by the IC on TLM guidance, TLM development and piloting, in-service teacher training modules, and capacity building for Assessment Reform is informed by a structured review of the current context and a QA roadmap, so that workflow and resources are appropriate to the national context and needs of Uzbekistan;
- 2) Develop a set of quality criteria jointly with government counterparts to ensure that all deliverables are aligned with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and with international good practice;
- 3) Apply the quality criteria consistently, through structured feedback, so that deliverables developed by MOES and RSMCDE in collaboration with the IC are of a high standard of quality, fit for purpose in the context of Uzbekistan, and ready for validation and scale-up; and
- 4) Provide independent technical review, quality assurance, and strategic advice to support alignment and coherence across Curriculum Reform, Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) Reform, and Reform of the National Assessment System, ensuring that proposed frameworks, standards, competencies, pedagogical approaches, learning materials, and assessment processes are mutually consistent, aligned with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), and informed by international good practice.

Development of quality criteria

During the inception phase of each workstream (deliverables 1.1.1 and 2.1.1), the consultant will develop, in consultation with RSMCDE, Ministry of Education and Science (MES) and UNICEF, a set of quality criteria for each type of deliverable to be reviewed (frameworks and guidance; TLMs; piloting methodology, tools and reports; training packages; and Assessment Reform documents). The quality criteria will:

- be grounded in the NCF, the requirements to State Educational Standards (Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 157 of 27 March 2024), the Partnership Compact for Education Reform 2023-2026, and international good practice;
- cover, as a minimum: alignment with the NCF and competency-based learning outcomes; pedagogical soundness and progression; inclusion and accessibility, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and accessible formats for children with disabilities; gender-transformative content; integration of digital, socio-emotional learning, life skills and green competencies; alignment with formative and summative assessment; feasibility and usability for teachers in diverse school contexts, including marginalised contexts; and, for piloting and data analysis, the technical quality of the evidence;
- set out clear indicators and a rating scale for each criterion (e.g. meets standard / partially meets standard / does not meet standard);
- be validated with government counterparts and agreed with UNICEF before first use, and updated as needed during the assignment.

Structured feedback

All QA reviews will be documented using a standard structured feedback format agreed with UNICEF during the inception phase. Each structured feedback report will include:

- a) a summary of the deliverable reviewed and the scope of the review;
- b) an assessment of the deliverable against each applicable quality criterion, with a rating and supporting evidence;
- c) key strengths, and identified gaps or risks;
- d) prioritised, actionable recommendations, distinguishing required revisions from suggested improvements;
- e) a QA recommendation on the status of the deliverable (endorsed; endorsed subject to minor revisions; or major revisions required and re-submission); and
- f) for revised and final deliverables, verification of how earlier feedback has been addressed.

Management and reporting

Under the overall guidance of the Chief of Education, the consultant will report directly to, and work under the direct supervision of, the UNICEF Education Specialist (Contract Manager). The consultant will work closely with MES, RSMCDE and the IC, and will take part in coordination and review meetings as required. The Education Specialist is the main focal point and liaison between the consultant, UNICEF and its partners. The consultant's structured feedback reports and other outputs, as set out in the table of deliverables below, are subject to review and approval by UNICEF before payment.

Duration of assignment: 24 Months with possible extension depending on the project needs.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
1. Technical support and oversight of curriculum reform		
1.1. Inception Phase Develop inception report, outlining QA methodology, quality criteria, structured feedback format, workplan and timeline for technical support and oversight of curriculum reform	Deliverable 1.1.1: Inception Report for QA oversight of curriculum reform (TLM workstream), including: a. overview of the context and the anticipated QA approach and methodology; b. quality criteria for each type of deliverable, with indicators and rating scale, agreed with government counterparts; c. structured feedback template and QA review protocol; d. provisional workplan, with	January 30, 2027

	<p>timeframes aligned to the IC deliverables;</p> <p>e. roles and responsibilities of the consultant, RSMCDE/MOES, the IC and UNICEF in the QA process</p>	
<p>1.2. Development and verification of TLM framework, criteria, and guidance</p> <p>Work closely with UNICEF and the IC to review deliverables and provide QA input on the development and verification of TLM framework, criteria, and guidance</p>	<p>Deliverable 1.2.1: Structured feedback on the IC Inception Report (system analysis, mapping of current practices, gaps and opportunities) and stakeholder presentation, assessed against the agreed quality criteria.</p>	February 28, 2027
	<p>Deliverable 1.2.2: Structured feedback on draft TLM Framework and TLM Criteria alignment with NCF, CBE, UDL, gender-transformative, inclusive, digital, SEL, and green education principles, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.</p>	April 30, 2027
	<p>Deliverable 1.2.3: Structured feedback on draft guidance for producing/adapting and pilot testing TLMs which is aligned with NCF implementation roadmap, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.</p>	May 30, 2027
	<p>Deliverable 1.2.4: Structured feedback on final Framework, Criteria, and Guidelines; workshop report and documented feedback from validation process; verification and certification statement, to be provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against</p>	June 30, 2027

	agreed quality criteria.	
<p>1.3. Development, piloting, and verification of TLMs with capacity building</p> <p>Work closely with UNICEF and the IC to review deliverables and provide QA input on the development, piloting, and verification of TLMs with capacity building</p>	Deliverable 1.3.1: Structured feedback on subject scope; detailed TLM development plan; draft piloting methodology, sampling guidance, tools, and protocols, to be provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.	July 30, 2027
	Deliverable 1.3.2: Feedback on report on testing of tool, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.	August 30, 2027
	Deliverable 1.3.3: Feedback on final piloting methodology, sampling guidance, tools, and protocols ready for piloting, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.	August 30, 2027
	Deliverable 1.3.4: Structured feedback on training reports, including training modules package (facilitator guides, participant handouts, session plans) for subject group TLM authors, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.	August 30, 2027
	Deliverable 1.3.5: Structured feedback on draft TLMs for subjects; interim workshop reports, including additional training materials, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against	November 30, 2027

	agreed quality criteria.	
	Deliverable 1.3.6: Feedback on pilot testing reports; data analysis reports, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.	December 25, 2027
	Deliverable 1.3.7: Structured feedback on revised TLMs and supplementary report outlining approach to evidence-based improvements, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.	March 30, 2028
	Deliverable 1.3.8: Feedback on final TLM packages; verification report and certification status; final workshop reports, including additional training materials, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.	June 30, 2028
<p>1.4. Development of in-service teacher training modules on the new curriculum and TLMs</p> <p>Work closely with UNICEF and the IC to review deliverables and provide QA input on the development of in-service teacher training modules on the new curriculum and TLMs</p>	Deliverable 1.4.1: Structured feedback on draft training modules package (facilitator guides, participant handouts, session plans) , provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.	September 30, 2028
	Deliverable 1.4.2: Feedback on pilot reports with recommendations for improvements of training modules	November 30, 2028
	Deliverable 1.4.3: Feedback on final modules, trainer manuals, and participant handouts in digital-	December 25, 2028

	ready format; final report	
2. Technical support and oversight of assessment reform		
<p>2.1. Inception Phase</p> <p>Develop inception report, outlining QA methodology, quality criteria, structured feedback format, workplan and timeline for technical support and oversight of assessment reform</p>	<p>Deliverable 2.1.1: Inception Report for QA oversight of capacity building for national teams undertaking Assessment Reform, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. overview of the context and the anticipated QA approach and methodology; b. quality criteria for Assessment Reform deliverables, with indicators and rating scale, agreed with government counterparts; c. structured feedback template and QA review protocol; d. provisional workplan, with timeframes aligned to the IC deliverables 	January 30, 2027
<p>2.2. Capacity Building</p> <p>Work closely with UNICEF and the IC to review deliverables and provide QA input on the Training Plan for Capacity Building National Teams undertaking Assessment Reform and Training Report</p>	<p>Deliverable 2.2.1: Structured feedback on Training Plan for Capacity Building National Teams undertaking Assessment Reform, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.</p>	April 30, 2027
	<p>Deliverable 2.2.2: Feedback on Training materials and Report, including verification of how earlier QA feedback on the Training Plan has been addressed, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.</p>	August 30, 2027

<p>2.3. Assessment Reform</p> <p>Work closely with UNICEF and the IC to review deliverables and provide QA input on the development of Assessment Reform Recommendations and Final Report on Assessment Reforms, and Future Priorities for Capacity Building of National Assessment Experts</p>	<p>Deliverable 2.3.1: Structured feedback on Assessment Reform Recommendations, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.</p>	<p>December 25, 2027</p>
	<p>Deliverable 2.3.2: Feedback on Final Report on Assessment Reforms, and Future Priorities for Capacity Building of National Assessment Experts, provided in the form of an associated report, including detailed checklist against agreed quality criteria.</p>	<p>December 25, 2028</p>
<p>2.4. Alignment of curriculum, TLM and learning assessment with Education Quality Assurance</p> <p>Work closely with UNICEF and the IC to review deliverables and provide QA input on development Education Quality Assurance framework, tools, guidelines and monitoring mechanism to facilitate coherence, sequencing, and alignment across curriculum, teaching-learning materials, assessment, teacher professional development, and quality assurance reforms.</p>	<p>Deliverable 2.4.1: Feedback and recommendations on strengthening alignment of Curriculum/TLM, Assessment and Teacher professional development with the Education Quality Assurance Framework. Provided in the form of report.</p>	<p>February 28, 2027</p>
	<p>Deliverable 2.4.2: Feedback and recommendations on tools, guidelines and monitoring mechanisms for education quality assurance framework.</p>	<p>April 30, 2027</p>

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 in Education, Social Sciences, or another related field

Work Experience:

- Professional experience in Quality Assurance of Education Products

Language Requirements:

- Excellent written and spoken English

Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:

- Knowledge of education quality assurance approaches.
- Experience and expertise in Assessment.
- Understanding of current reforms in preschool and school education in Uzbekistan.
- Ability to work effectively with government counterparts.
- Prior experience with UN agencies and other international organizations.

Desirables:

- Previous experience of undertaking related work in Uzbekistan
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