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TERMS OF REFERENCE

International consultant on capacity building of preschool professionals in model inclusive preschools

CONTRACT MODALITY Individual Consultancy

DUTY STATION **Tashkent, Uzbekistan,** Remote

DURATION OF CONTRACT 13 Months

Purpose of Assignment

Background: UNICEF, in collaboration with Government of Uzbekistan, is advancing the national agenda for inclusive education to ensure that every child — regardless of ability, gender, geography, ethnicity, or socio-economic background — has equitable access to quality learning opportunities within the framework of SmartED project jointly financed by the Islamic Development Bank and Global Partnership for Education.

As part of this support, UNICEF assists the development and operationalization of the *Inclusive Education Strategy of Uzbekistan,* which defines a shared vision and strategic directions for developing inclusive education systems and environment to contribute to the revision of the existing legislative framework.

In this context, UNICEF is supporting Government of Uzbekistan to build a pool of national specialists with solid knowledge and positive hands-on experience in inclusive preschools. The process involves modelling inclusive education in ten pilot preschools, where new programmes, tools, pre/school inclusion teams, and support processes will be tested and refined to inform national capacity building programs, teachers and other professional qualification requirements and system-wide principles, standards, and mechanisms to strengthen inclusion across the whole education system.

Preschools selected across regions, serving as resource centers and testing grounds for innovative inclusion models. While giving preschools an autonomy to develop their policies, plans and practices and find contextual solutions addressing their unique needs, guidelines and tools will be designed based on the Whole School Approach around three key indicators of equitable education systems: Access – Participation – Achievement.

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 delivery of a Professional Capacity Building Programme for teachers, special educators, teacher trainers and other education professionals. The programme aims to strengthen the capacity of education professionals to apply inclusive education principles and approaches in their daily practice, including inclusive pedagogy, identification of barriers to learning, differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), assessment for learning, collaboration and school–family–learner partnerships.

Under the Smart-ED Project, the overall approach and initial module of the Professional Capacity Building Programme have already been developed, and the first training module has been delivered. The assignment will build on this work and support the further development and delivery of the programme.

UNICEF has engaged an International Consultant to provide system-level technical leadership for the development and operationalization of the overall Inclusive Education Strategy and the Advanced

Professional Capacity Building Framework for schools and preschools.

To complement this assignment, UNICEF seeks an International Consultant on Delivery of the Professional Capacity Building Programme on Inclusive Education to support the practical development, adaptation and delivery of the programme's training resources and modules.

The assignment will contribute to strengthening the capacity of teachers and other education professionals to establish inclusive learning environments in which all children, including children with disabilities and other children experiencing barriers to learning and participation, can learn and participate meaningfully.

The consultant will be working closely with the System-Level technical Consultant and responsible for translating the programme's evidence-based frameworks, methodologies and master trainer materials into practical, accessible and contextually relevant teacher professional development resources, including a teachers' handbook, a self-paced online courses, training presentations, practical exercises, assessment tools and other supporting materials. The consultant will also deliver the agreed training modules through face-to-face training sessions across selected regions of Uzbekistan and hands-on practical support and couching. The training delivery will be informed by the programme's agreed methodology and will emphasize practical application, classroom-based strategies, peer learning and the development of inclusive teaching competencies. Beyond workshop-based training, a structured coaching and mentoring system will be established. The Consultant will oversee training of mentors on inclusive education who will observe classroom practices and provide constructive, practice-based feedback to teachers and educators, support their theoretical knowledge to apply in classroom. All professional development content and methodologies will be aligned with ongoing national reforms related to curriculum, assessment, and teacher qualification frameworks to ensure coherence, relevance, and long-term sustainability. The overall approach aims to create a virtuous cycle in which better-trained and well-supported teachers and early childhood educators deliver higher-quality inclusive education, which is subsequently recognized and reinforced by the education system through professional standards, certification mechanisms, and career advancement opportunities.

Purpose of the consultancy:
The purpose of this consultancy is to co-design, deliver, and support competency-based capacity-building programme for teachers and other education professionals in model preschools, aligned with the Inclusive Education Programmatic Framework (IECPF).
The assignment will ensure that inclusive education competencies are translated into daily professional practice, supported through mentoring, peer learning, and evidence-based professional development models that can be institutionalized within national systems.

The Consultant is expected to work in close collaboration with UNICEF, the International Consultant leading the system-level development of the Inclusive Education Strategy and the Advanced Professional Capacity Building Programme, and relevant national counterparts, including Ministry of Education and Science (MOES), established teams of experts and consultants already working in inclusive education for general secondary education and preschool education.

Scope of Work

Scope of Work:

The consultancy is expected to run from December 2026 to December 2027.
The Consultant is expected to:

1.Design an Inclusive Education Capacity-Building Framework and preschool based TPD

- Review the Inclusive Education Strategy of Uzbekistan and relevant national policies, standards and guidance, as well as Operational Framework, implementation plan and capacity building architecture; existing training

modules, methodological resources, teacher professional development materials and relevant international good practices.
- Contribute to the design of preschool-based professional development models, including structured mentorship, coaching, and peer learning communities in pilot preschools focusing on child centered, play based, competency- based inclusive education to create effective and scalable community of practices among teachers.
- Update Operational plan, capacity building architecture and develop detailed workplan with milestones aligned with deliverables.

2. Design training package on inclusive education:
- In collaboration with the International Consultant on development and piloting of inclusive preschool education framework design training modules/materials on inclusive education for preschool teachers, special educators, ECE and other professionals, focusing on child cognitive and social-emotional development, diverse instructional strategies (differentiated instruction, personalized learning, adaptive curriculum, UDL principles), teaching methods for foundational learning for children with disabilities and needs in additional support, use of specialized learning resources, lesson planning, classroom and behavior management in inclusive settings. Materials to be in line with preschool curriculum.
- Design practical, accessible and contextually relevant training and methodological materials for regional and preschool based mentors, including facilitator guides with practical examples, case studies, participant handouts, lesson planning tools, observation rubrics, self-assessment tools, and evaluation instruments.
- Develop capacity building materials for preschool inclusion teams and preschool leadership to foster rights-based, family-centered approaches; provide guidance on collaboration mechanisms with health, social protection, and specialized services (e.g. PMPC, VTEK, NGOs, DPOs).
- Ensure alignment and interoperability of developed digital content with national digital learning platforms, including ISTTI platforms, to support integration and scalability.

3. Development of the Teachers' Handbook on Inclusive Education

The consultant will develop a comprehensive and practical teachers' handbook aligned with the Professional Capacity Building Programme modules. The handbook will:
- Provide teachers and educators with practical guidance on inclusive education principles and approaches. Address identifying and reducing barriers to learning and participation.
- Explain the application of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiated instruction and inclusive classroom practices. Provide guidance on inclusive lesson planning based, teaching and learning materials, classroom management and assessment for learning and development on preschool curriculum and ELDS.
- Develop evidence-based practical examples, case studies, classroom scenarios, exercises and reflection questions, tools and templates that teachers can apply in their daily work.
- Support collaboration between classroom teachers, special educators, School Inclusion Teams, learners and families.
- Be developed in an accessible and user-friendly format, suitable for use during training and as a reference resource after training.

4. Deliver and pilot competency-based capacity-building programme in model preschools
- Deliver and pilot capacity-building activities through a blended approach in model preschools: in-person training, classroom-based mentoring and coaching, online self-paced learning modules, virtual workshops, and community of practice sessions all aligned with the preschool national curriculum.
- Ensure capacity building program effectiveness and classroom application in model preschools through introducing and piloting preschool-based professional development models, including structured mentorship, coaching, and peer learning communities in pilot preschools focusing on child centered, play and competency-based inclusive education to create effective and scalable community of practices among teachers.
- Build capacity for preschool inclusion teams and preschool leadership to foster rights-based, family-centered approaches; provide guidance on collaboration mechanisms with health, social protection, and specialized services; establishing welcoming safe, enabling and inclusive culture in pilot schools.
- Build capacity of regional and school-based mentors on supporting teachers to adapt teaching strategies and

Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) that are relevant and responsive to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and diversity, teaching methods for foundational learning for children with disabilities and needs in additional support, classroom and behavior management in inclusive settings.

- Build the capacity of key national stakeholders on a rights-based, whole-school approach to inclusive education, including the Ministry of Education and Science, In-Service Teacher Training Institute (ISTTI), the Tashxis Center, NASP, and Inclusive Education working groups.

5. Document results and support to national scale-up.

- Design system of assessment to evaluate the impact of capacity building activities and scalability of piloted preschool based professional models.
- Ensure the technical quality, consistency and practical relevance of all training materials and learning resources.
- Document lessons learned and monitor implementation by collecting participant feedback, identifying emerging good practices, and conducting pre- and post-assessments to evaluate the impact of capacity building activities and scalability of piloted school based professional models.
- Revise capacity-building programme content and preschool based professional model based on field evidence, lessons learned, and challenges.
- Develop a policy brief summarizing key findings and recommendations.
- Support national technical consultations and knowledge-sharing activities with relevant government institutions, universities, Pedagogical Excellence Centres and practitioners.
- Provide technical guidance and ongoing consultation to UNICEF, MoES, and national institutions to ensure quality, coherence, and sustainability, and to support alignment with broader inclusive education reforms in Uzbekistan.

Management

International Consultant will work under direct supervision of ECE/D Specialist in coordination with ECD Officer. Consultant is expected to work in close collaboration and coordination with International Consultant on Education Programmatic Framework (IEPCF), national partners and government officials, as well as with other international and national consultants assigned by UNICEF for ECD programme.

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Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
Design an Inclusive Education Capacity-Building Framework and preschool based TPD • Review and update the Inclusive Education Operational Framework, implementation plan, and capacity-building architecture based on national policies, existing training resources, and international good practices. • Support the design of preschool-based professional development models, including mentoring, coaching, and peer learning communities, and develop a detailed workplan with milestones aligned to project deliverables	**Deliverable 1** Inception report including: context overview and methodology; detailed workplan with milestones; revised Inclusive preschool education operational framework and provide relevant inputs; updated capacity building architecture (around 6-8 modules); plan for the handbooks and online courses; stakeholder engagement and quality assurance approach.	31 January 2027
Design training package on inclusive education: • Develop training package (outline of modules, training modules, agenda, PPPs, handouts, activities and assessment tools) and methodological materials on inclusive preschool education, aligned with the national curriculum. Develop digital learning content for preschool teachers, specialists, Deputy Directors and Directors to be integrated into the ISTTI LMS, to support scale-up, and sustainability.	**Deliverable 2** Technical Review and LMS Integration Package Developed training modules 2-4 (packages) on inclusive preschool education, including training outline, training manual/handbook, presentations slides, handouts, assessment tools, etc. Develop training modules 5 -6 (7) modules including training outline, training manual/handbook, presentations slides, handouts, assessment tools, incorporating Lessons from first round Developed on-line materials/courses on Inclusive education (for teachers, specialists, Deputy Directors and Directors) integrated into the ISTTI LMS.	31 March 2027 31 May 2027 30 September 2027

3. Development of the Teachers' Handbook on Inclusive Education Develop a practical Teachers' Handbook on Inclusive Education aligned with the professional capacity-building programme and preschool curriculum and ELDS.	**Deliverable 3** Teachers' Handbook on Inclusive Preschool Education covering all modules, including: key concepts; step-by-step classroom guidance; checklists, templates and worked examples; links preschool curriculum, ELDS and SOPs; and graphic and layout brief for the designer.	31 July 2027
4. Deliver and pilot competency-based capacity-building programme in model preschools Deliver a blended cap acity-building programme for teachers and specialists in 10 model preschools. Pilot a preschool-based professional development model with mentoring, coaching, and peer learning. Train inclusion teams, leaders, and mentors on inclusive and family-centered practices. Conduct stakeholder workshops and produce a pilot implementation report with recommendations.	**Deliverable 4** Report on capacity-building programme delivered to 10 model preschools, including: (a) preparation and delivery of training sessions; (b) preparation of practical exercises and case-based discussions; (d) consolidated evaluation and participant feedback records; and (e) recommendations for improving programme content and delivery. Report on mentor and coaching sessions implemented in all 10 pilot preschools with recommendations. Inclusion teams and preschool leaders trained, and pilot implementation and scale-up recommendations report submitted.	Round 1 of capacity building by 31 May 2027 Round 2 of capacity building by 30 November 2027
5. Document results and support national scale-up Develop an assessment framework and evaluate programme effectiveness and scalability. Document results, lessons learned, and promising practices from implementation. Refine training and professional development models based on evidence.	**Deliverable 5** Assessment and monitoring framework developed. Report provided included implementation results and lessons learned, analysis of training assessment findings and stakeholder engagement.	30 November 2027

Produce a policy brief with recommendations for national scale-up. Facilitate stakeholder consultations and provide technical support for sustainable implementation.		
6. Quality assurance, sustainability and final reporting Provide monthly and quarterly implementation reports with feedback, recommendations and further actions. Prepare recommendations for integration and sustainability, hand over all materials and prepare the final documentation report.	**Deliverable 6** Monthly (at least 12) and quarterly (at least 4) reports provided. Final consultancy report summarizing outputs, results, lessons learned, outstanding gaps and recommendations, including options for integrating the modules into in-service and pre-service teacher education and for sustaining the national pool of trainers; and handover of all final materials in editable formats	End of each month; 31 December 2027

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:

Masters 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:

- At least 10 years of professional and relevant international experience in teacher training on Inclusive education and teachers' professional development, preferably in the field of ECD/E. Work experience with UNICEF will be an asset.
- At least 10 years of professional experience in designing and implementing inclusive education training materials, online courses, teachers' handbooks for ECD/preschool educators.

Language Requirements:

Excellent written and spoken skills in 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 for ECD/preschool education level.
- Proven ability to design professional development and teaching and learning materials on inclusive education, with a focus on a child-centred pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Good knowledge of the education system in Uzbekistan, with particular focus on inclusive education and ECD.
- Excellent analytical and writing skills, with strong facilitation, communication and reporting skills in English.
- Strong interpersonal and stakeholder engagement skills.