**The Kyrgyz Republic**

**ENHANCING THE FOUNDATION OF LEARNING PROJECT**

**Terms of Reference # KG/GPE/CS/IC-01B**

**Local consultant to enhance existing preschool teacher training modules with section on safe environment, providing acceptable behavior to prevent diseases after COVID-19 crisis (including hygiene, effective use of safe space, etc.)**

1. **Project Description.**

Supporting the global imperative to end learning poverty, the project aims to enhance the foundation of learning by increasing access to preschool education by the children of most vulnerable households and raising their school readiness for learning. Building on the success of the Kyrgyz Early Education Project (KEEP) financed by a previous implementation grant from GPE and complementing the IDA’s recently approved Learning for the Future Project (US$50 million), the project, seeks to contribute to human capital development through enhanced foundation of learning. The project is aligned with one of the IDA project’s objectives to increase school readiness by establishing an additional 60 CbKs in low income and underserved communities which will increase the enrolment of 3,000 children aged 3-5 years. Together with the integrated support for teacher training, tracking and evaluating child growth and development and preschool financing reforms, the project will not only expand more equitable access but also raise the quality of the program to enhance the foundation of learning of the targeted beneficiaries.

The proposed project development objective is to increase equitable access to quality pre-school education.

The PDO-level indicators are the following:

* Increased number of children aged 3-5 years enrolled in an early education program in targeted communities, disaggregated by gender;
* Improved development of children in language and cognitive development, disaggregated by gender.

**II. Project Components.** The project consists of three components.

***Component 1: Expanding preschool education for under-served children.*** The aim of this component is to increase equitable access to early education services that meet quality standards for under-served children in targeted communities.

*Sub-component 1.1: Expanded preschool education.* The objective of this sub-component is to increase equitable access to quality ECE in poor rural areas with no or low access through establishing CbKs and enhance the effectiveness of teaching-learning practices in preschool.

*Sub-component 1.2: Increased effectiveness in teaching practice.* The objective of this subcomponent is to increase teacher capacities in preschool education through the strengthened design and delivery of teacher training programs aligned to the recently approved child development standards and evidence from the science of learning.

***Component 2: Improving policy & finance for the system effectiveness.*** The objective of this component is to improve policy and system effectiveness. To that end, it will finance technical assistance for policy areas outlined in Education Development Strategy (EDS) 2021-2040 and Action Plan 2021-2023 for implementation of EDS 2021-2040 to ensure equitable access to quality preschool education: transition to normative financing at all levels of education and greater independence in the management of resources at the level of educational institutions; boosting of public-private partnership; efficient and impartial system for monitoring and evaluating learning outcomes; and cost-effective and flexible professional support to teachers.

***Component 3: Ensuring citizens’ engagement and implementation support*.**

The objective of this component is to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged in project implementation and monitoring.

*Sub-component 3.1: Stakeholders’ engagement.* Stakeholders will be engaged in the implementation of activities across the project, building on the mechanisms already in place to involve parents, particularly fathers, and community members. Specifically, this includes: (a) the provision of information for parents on importance of early development of children, story books reading through leaflets, posters, guidance on story books reading importance and techniques, etc.; and (b) community monitoring through community scorecards.

*Sub-component 3.2: Evaluation.* To assess the project impact, an evaluation using Randomized Control Trials (RCT) will be conducted to determine if participation in the project supported CbKs had an impact on child development. The evaluation design will use a randomized phase-in approach, where communities receiving the early childhood intervention earlier will serve as the ‘treatment group’, and communities receiving the intervention later in the project cycle will serve as the ‘control group’.

*Sub-component 3.3: Implementation support.* This component will support the coordination, technical quality and fiduciary integrity, compliance with environmental and social standards in due course of implementation, as well as the monitoring, evaluation and reporting on project processes and results. It will also support systems for collecting beneficiary feedback to inform project implementation.

**III. Objective of the Assignment**

Enhance existing training modules for kindergarten teachers with a section on a safe environment, acceptable behavior to prevent diseases during and after the COVID-19 crisis (including hygiene and sanitation), and effective use of developmental and health-saving spaces tailored to children's needs.

**IV. Scope of Services**

To achieve this, it is expected to do the following:

* Develop and agree with key Project Implementation/Coordination Unit (PIU/PCU) staff a detailed work plan for the entire period of the assignment.
* Enhance a training module and teaching and learning materials for kindergarten teachers to include such topics as:

- creating a safe play and developmental environment;

- providing acceptable behavior to prevent diseases during and after the CОVID-9 crisis;

- creating conditions for physical development and health promotion (including the issues of sanitary and epidemiological rules and norms);

- effective use of developmental and health-saving space tailored to the needs and capabilities of all children, including children with special educational needs.

* The section of the preschool training module will determine targets, main objectives and basic content of preschool education (according to the State Educational Standard of the Kyrgyz Republic "Preschool Education and Child Care"), will describe conditions of the organization of the educational process, will disclose approaches to the design of a developmental subject-space environment, including organization of functional and transformable developmental environment, providing various activities: playing, cognitive, motor, creative and research.
* The section of the preschool training module will be developed taking into account sanitary-epidemiological rules and regulations, fire safety, civil protection, radiation safety, safety of people on water bodies and hydrometeorology, regular evacuation drills for children and staff.
* A special feature of the developed section should be the availability of auxiliary and teaching and learning materials aimed at the development of key competencies of preschool teachers on the organization of a safe environment, providing acceptable behavior to prevent disease during and after the CОVID-19 crisis (including hygiene and sanitation), and the effective use of developmental and health saving space tailored to the age characteristics and needs of children.
* Discuss the developed section with experts in preschool education at Republican Institute of In-service Teacher Training (roundtable) and agree on a document to implement the module (online and offline formats) in the training course for preschool teachers at RIITT in-service teacher training courses.
* Prepare a module for ToT, training of selected trainers on a competitive basis with assessment instruments of the quality of mastering the material of the training module program. Train 1 master-trainer and deliver ToT for selected trainers together with him/her.
* Ensure official transfer of the developed section of the training module and teaching and learning materials (soft and hard copy in Kyrgyz or Russian) to the relevant structures of the MES KR, RIITT for further integration into the existing courses.
* Prepare relevant materials and provide assistance to the e-platform development team to digitalize the developed module and training materials as part of the content of the RIITT IT-platform.

**V. Expected Duration**

The proposed duration of the assignment is 10 weeks with progress reports.

**VI. Institutional arrangements**

The Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Enhancing the Foundation of Learning Project coordinator, with the training coordinator and work closely with the relevant structural unit of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, Kyrgyz Academy of Education, Republican Institute of In-service Teacher Training. The reports will be agreed with RIITT Director and project coordinator, and approved by PIU/PCU director under MES KR**.**

**VII. Reporting and Approval Procedures**

Financial payments will be made only upon approval of the relevant reports no later than the dates listed below:

1. Inception Report (payment of 15% of the total amount)
2. Interim Report (payment of 45% of the total amount)
3. Final Report (payment of 40% of the total amount)

**Inception report** is due 1 week after the contract is signed and shall include:

* Detailed action plan-schedule for the entire period of the assignment.
* Analysis of materials on safety, hygiene and sanitation, disease prevention during and after the COVID-19 crisis, effective use of safe space, and etc.

**Interim report** is due 4 weeks after the contract is signed:

* Draft training module (100%)
* Minutes of discussion with experts in the working groups and in RIITT.

**Final report** is due 10 weeks after the contract is signed:

* RIITT-approved training module with teaching and learning materials. Module for training of trainers (ToT). All materials should be submitted in duplicate in Russian or Kyrgyz language in electronic and paper versions.
* Narrative progress report with the list of trained master-trainers.

**VIII. Qualification Requirements**

* Higher education in pedagogy (in preschool education is an advantage).
* At least 5 years of experience in preschool education (knowledge of the basic laws of age development of preschool children, basic methods of work with preschool children, safety issues in the organization of the teaching process).
* At least 5 years of experience in the successful development of teaching and practical materials for preschool education.
* Proven experience in effective cooperation with the academic community and practitioners, with the MES KR, KAE and RIITT.
* Fluency in Kyrgyz and Russian.