

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

<b>Contract:</b>	<b>ICS-08</b>		
<b>Project:</b>	Kyrgyz Republic: Skills Development System Transformation Program		
<b>Expertise:</b>	<b>Environmental Safeguards Specialist</b>		
<b>Source:</b>	National	<b>Category:</b>	Independent Individual Consultant

### **Objective and Purpose of the Assignment.**

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has requested the small expenditure financing facility (SEFF) activity to support project preparation activities for the \$39.5 million Skills Development System Transformation Program (SDSTP) planned for ADB Board approval in 2026. The SDSTP, which uses results-based lending (RBL) modality, aims to (i) enhance the employability and competitiveness of the country’s youth by building a more inclusive, skills-oriented education system; and (ii) increase the seismic resilience of educational infrastructure. The program will support the implementation of the National Education Development Program for 2021–2040, its Action Plan for 2027–2032, and the State Program for Safe school and preschool educational institutions in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2015–2024.

The program will i) expand the government’s ongoing effort to transform the general education system by creating smooth pathways from general to vocational and higher education and better aligning it with labor market demand; and ii) further scale up government investments in seismic resilience and improved learning environments. Project outputs will be: (i) Governance and system efficiency of secondary education and TVET improved; (ii) Seismic resilience and learning environments of educational infrastructure improved; (iii) Quality and labor-market relevance of TVET programs enhanced; (iv) Skills track integrated into upper-secondary education (grades 10–12). The project is estimated to cost \$44.5 million, comprising \$20.0 million (COL), \$19.5 million (an ADF grant from the thematic window to support geophysical risk reduction), and \$5 million expected to be financed by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

### **Scope of Work**

ADB’s Safeguard Policy Statement (2009) applies to RBL. Specifically, RBL programs must be designed to achieve the policy objectives and adhere to the policy principles of the Safeguard Policy Statement but using the government’s program safeguards system. The International Safeguards Specialist will lead a program safeguards system assessment (PSSA) and will be supported by the National Environment Safeguards Consultant. The PSSA preparation is in line with the requirements of ADB as defined in ADB Technical Staff Guidance for Results-Based Lending for Programs (November 2021), to identify gaps in the program’s safeguards system, if any, and to identify required program actions to ensure consistency of the program’s safeguards system with ADB SPS requirements.

In addition, the National Environment Safeguards Consultant shall ensure that program systems are functioning, and environmental risks are managed during project implementation. The specialist will ensure that the program complies with all relevant environmental safeguard requirements. The objective is to identify potential environmental impacts of the program (particularly those related to construction/renovation of education facilities), propose measures to avoid or mitigate negative impacts, and integrate those measures into the project design and implementation plan. The specialist will prepare the necessary environmental assessment documentation (such as an Initial Environmental Examination and Environmental Management

Plan) and obtain government environmental clearances. During initial implementation, the specialist will also help establish environmental monitoring and supervision mechanisms. The ultimate goal is to ensure the program is implemented in an environmentally responsible manner, with disaster-resilient and inclusive infrastructure that also meets environmental standards for safety and sustainability.

### **Detailed Tasks and/or Expected Outputs.**

#### **PSSA preparation**

In coordination with International Safeguards Specialist, the National Environment Safeguards Consultant will:

- Interview implementing agency's environment safeguards officer on how environmental issues are being managed, monitored and reported at corporate level and how mitigation measures are implemented in order to comply with the safeguard's requirements and relevant national and local laws and regulations;
- Conduct field visits to selected relevant sites to assess the adequacy of DMC's safeguard systems pertinent to the RBL program;
- Support in carrying out consultations with key stakeholders during PSSA preparation. Ensure that consultation meetings on PSSA will provide adequate and relevant information in a form and language accessible to people being consulted. Prepare minutes and document consultation meetings;
- Support detailed engineering design (DED) Environmental Specialist in conducting stakeholder consultations with MoE, local educational authorities and other key stakeholders; and in the establishment and initial implementation of grievance redress mechanism (GRM). He / she will also gradually hand over the monitoring and management of social risks and related tasks to the Safeguards Officer of the Implementing Agency;
- Perform other tasks relevant to PSSA preparation.

#### **Program Implementation**

During program implementation, the National Environment Safeguards Consultant will:

- Conduct orientation on PSSA, PAP, and environmental assessment and review framework (EARF) (as required) with Environment Safeguards Officer and other relevant staff of project implementation unit (PIU) of EA - Ministry of Education and IA as required;
- Prepare screening and categorization of the first batch of subprojects under the program, one for each type, based on ADB rapid environmental assessment (REA) checklists and ensure that no category A subprojects are permitted, and no school buildings to be rehabilitated or constructed are located in or adjacent to environmentally sensitive locations;
- For each type of subproject, prepare the environmental protection sections of the design and estimate documentation (DED) report, submit to Expert Commission of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision (MNRETS) of the Kyrgyz Republic, and obtain the national approval from the Expert Commission;
- In coordination with Climate Specialist and Structural Engineer, ensure climate adaptation and inclusive design measures are incorporated in initial environmental examination (IEE);
- For each type of subproject, prepare the required environment safeguard documents (e.g., initial environmental examination (IEE) for category B subproject), including environmental management plans (EMPs), and obtain approval from State Agency on Environmental Protection and Forestry (SAEPF);

- Ensure national approval (approved OVOS, together with environment expertise conclusion), environmental management plan (EMP) and relevant environment, health and safety (EHS) conditions are included in bid and contract documents and contract of selected contractor;
- In coordination with National Social Safeguards Consultant, conduct meaningful consultations with stakeholders around major rehabilitation and new construction sites, school staff, students and local authorities;
- In coordination with National Social Safeguards Consultant, ensure grievance redress mechanism is established and functional;
- Conduct capacity building with contractors for first batch of subprojects on environmental management and preparation of site-specific environmental management plan (SSEMP).
- Conduct site inspections together with the Environment Safeguards Officer to monitor the PSSA, PAP, EMP, SSEMP and other environment safeguards requirements. Use checklist to record findings and recommend corrective actions if issues are found;
- Prepare the first periodic environmental monitoring report (semi-annual environmental monitoring report for category B project) and submit to ADB until cleared for disclosure.

#### **Minimum Qualification Requirements.**

- The Consultant shall have a minimum of bachelor's degree in environmental engineering, environmental science, environmental management or any other allied field;
- The Consultant shall have at least 5 years of working experience in Kyrgyz Republic in preparing, implementing, and monitoring environment safeguards requirements. Experience in the implementation of multilateral development organizations' safeguard requirements is an advantage;
- Prior experience with international donor-funded projects preferable (ADB projects desirable);
- Strong coordination, communication, and reporting skills;
- Proficiency in Kyrgyz and Russian, some proficiency in English is desirable.

#### **Reporting Arrangements:**

- Compilation of relevant national and local laws and regulations;
- Interview documentation;
- Field visit documentation;
- Minutes of consultations;
- Inputs to the PSSA as requested and instructed by International Consultant.

**The consultant's contract will be a Lump Sum contract. Employment will be intermittent. Payment will be based on the reporting schedule (Milestones).**

<b>Place of Execution:</b>	<b>Duration:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>
Duty station is in PIU, located at the address: Bishkek, Manas ave. 22A.	12 months, with the possibility of extension.	Contract Commences _____, subject to ADB approval. Contract Validity _____.
Contract Period:	-----	-----