

## Terms of Reference

### For the establishment of an Institutional Contract

<i>Title:</i>	Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science, Higher Education and Innovations for CBE Teaching and Learning Materials Development, Pre-Service Teacher Education and Continuous Professional Development.
<i>Consultancy Mode:</i>	National <input type="checkbox"/> International <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Type of Contract:</i>	<b>Institutional Contract</b>
<i>Mode of Selection:</i>	Competitive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Single Source <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Location</i>	Kyrgyzstan
<i>Travel</i>	In country travel
<i>Language (s)</i>	English and Russian
<i>Duration of Contract:</i>	May – December 2026 (8 months)

#### 1. Background

The education system of the Kyrgyz Republic is undergoing a period of significant transformation, guided by national strategic priorities outlined in the National Development Strategy 2018-2040, the National Development Program 2026, and the ambitious Altyn Kazyk Programme. To support these reforms, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), has launched "The Joint ISDB/GPE Smart-Ed Project For Improving Access to and Quality of Inclusive Learning Opportunities for All Children in the Kyrgyz Republic (KGZ-1030)".

The project aims to improve poor learning outcomes by modernizing the curriculum and strengthening teacher training, while building the system's capacity to provide quality education for all children, especially those with disabilities who are often marginalized. To achieve this, the initiative is structured around key intervention pillars, including improving the quality of teaching and learning through curriculum reform and teacher development. UNICEF is the lead technical partner for managing and implementing specific components of the project that focus on enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

The primary objective of the interventions implemented by UNICEF is to support the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic in providing equitable and quality learning opportunities for all pre-school and school-aged children. To achieve this, UNICEF's work is structured around the **Component 2**, which focuses on fundamentally improving the quality of teaching and learning through systemic reforms in curriculum and teacher education.

This Terms of Reference seeks to engage a qualified institution to support the operationalization of Component 2 by providing technical assistance to develop competency-based teaching and learning materials (TLMs), reform teacher education programmes, and strengthen Continuous Professional Development (CPD) systems within the SmartEd project supporting the Altyn Kazyk Education Reform Programme.

#### 2. Purpose and specific objectives

##### 2.1 Overall Purpose

To provide high-level technical assistance to the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Science, Higher Education and Innovation (MoSHEI) in institutionalizing competency-based, inclusive and gender-responsive education reform through aligned improvements in TLM development, pre-service teacher education, and Continuous Professional Development System (CPD) systems:

1. Functional review, development and validation of competency-based TLM frameworks;
2. Functional review and reform of pre-service teacher education programmes;
3. Functional review and strengthening of CPD systems aligned to Competency-based Education (CBE), gender-responsive and inclusive education principles.

The institutional consultancy will support the implementation of the project **Component 2: Improving the quality of inclusive teaching and learning at pre-school and general secondary education**, including:

**Outcome 2.1: Preschool and general secondary students have access to inclusive, quality competency-based TLMs:** This outcome will be achieved when students and teachers across the country are using modern, engaging, and inclusive learning materials that promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving.

**Activity 2.1.2:** *New sets of CBE materials for selected national component subjects & grades*

**Outcome 2.2: Strengthened teacher education and support for implementation of CBE reform:** This outcome aims to strengthen teacher competencies to effectively implement competency-based, student-centered, inclusive pedagogical approaches.

**Activity 2.2.1:** *Revision of pre-service teacher education programs: This is a long-term, systemic intervention to ensure that pedagogical universities produce graduates who are prepared for the realities of the modern classroom and the demands of the CBE reform.*

**Activity 2.2.2:** *Support the implementation of continuous professional development (CPD) of current teachers. By using a modern blended-learning format, it helps them immediately apply new CBE and inclusive approaches in their daily work without long absences from the classroom.*

#### **Specific Objectives of the Consultancy:**

1. Strengthen national capacity of relevant ministries, universities, and teacher training institutions to implement competency-based education (CBE) reforms, integrating gender-responsive and inclusive education principles.
2. Provide technical support to the designated government partners for conducting comprehensive functional reviews of existing teaching and learning materials (TLMs), pre-service teacher education programmes, and continuous professional development (CPD) systems to assess alignment with CBE standards and national reform priorities.
3. Develop standardized criteria, methodologies, and quality assurance tools to guide the review, development, and monitoring of TLMs and teacher education programmes.
4. Provide evidence-based recommendations and detailed roadmaps for the design, piloting, validation, and implementation of revised TLMs, pre-service programmes, and CPD models, including blended learning approaches.
5. Support the establishment of sustainable mechanisms for institutional strengthening and system-level reform aligned with national education priorities and international best practices.
6. Ensure gender-responsiveness and inclusive education are embedded across all outputs.

### **3. Scope of activities (Description of the assignment)**

Bidders are expected to submit a comprehensive proposal covering all objectives of this consultancy. Partial bids will not be considered.

To achieve the objectives of this assignment, the following key interventions are required:

**Outcome 2.1: Preschool and general secondary students have access to inclusive, quality competency-based TLMs:**

**Activity 2.1.2:** *New sets of CBE-based Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) for selected national component subjects and grades.*

*Objective: Strengthen national systems for development, review, piloting, and institutionalization of CBE-aligned TLMs in selected national component subjects (Kyrgyz Language and Geography).*

**Key Tasks:**

1. Conduct capacity building for national experts and the core assigned team of the MOE, MoSHEI and other relevant institutions and the assigned Working Groups on competency-based methodologies in Kyrgyz language and Geography, including international best practices, and in full conformity with the national context and the Education Reform needs.
2. Provide technical support, including development of criteria, methodology, monitoring and quality assurance to the national Working Groups that will conduct a functional review of existing Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) against new CBE standards.
3. Provide continuous technical oversight and mentorship to National Working Groups during the functional review process to ensure evidence-based findings.
4. Facilitate the development of comprehensive National Frameworks for new CBE-aligned, inclusive TLMs and tools for pilot validation.
5. Formulate a detailed national roadmap for the phased development, piloting, and institutionalization of CBE TLMs.

**Expected Results:**

- National experts and decision-makers at the Ministries of Education and Science, Higher Education and Innovations and other relevant national institutions demonstrate strengthened capacity in applying competency-based methodologies for development of the functional review in teaching Kyrgyz Language and Geography, informed by international best practices.
- National Working Groups are technically equipped with standardized criteria, methodologies, monitoring and quality assurance tools to conduct functional reviews of teaching and learning materials.
- Functional review of existing TLMs is completed, documented, and validated in line with new CBE standards.
- National frameworks for the development of inclusive, gender-responsive CBE-aligned TLMs are developed and submitted for formal endorsement by the Ministry of Education.
- Tools and mechanisms for piloting and validation of TLMs are developed and tested.
- A national roadmap for the development, piloting, approval, and printing of TLMs is produced.

**Outcome 2.2: Strengthened teacher education and support for implementation of CBE reform**

**Activity 2.2.1:** *Revision of pre-service teacher education programs*

**Objective:** *Ensure that pedagogical universities produce graduates who are prepared for the realities of the modern classroom and the demands of the CBE reform. It aims to break the cycle of outdated teaching practices by reforming initial teacher education from the ground up.*

**Key tasks:**

1. **Facilitate** capacity building for national experts of 3 University Working Groups and the core assigned team of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science, Higher Education and Innovation and other relevant institutions on a functional review of existing pre-service teacher education programmes on compliance to the CBE reform, including international best practices and in full conformity with the national context and the Education Reform needs.
2. Provide technical support, including development of criteria, methodology, monitoring and quality assurance to the national Working Groups that will conduct a functional review of existing pre-service teacher education programmes in three selected pedagogical universities.
3. Develop recommendations and a detailed plan for development of the new pre-service teacher education programmes based on the findings of the functional review aligned with CBE, gender and inclusive education principles.

**Expected Results:**

- Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science, Higher Education and Innovation, and partner universities demonstrate strengthened capacity in applying competency-based methodologies for functional review of pre-service teacher education programmes, informed by international best practices and national education reform priorities.
- National University Working Groups are technically equipped with standardized criteria, methodologies, monitoring and quality assurance tools to conduct functional reviews of pre-service teacher education programmes.
- Functional review of existing pre-service teacher education programmes is completed, documented, and validated in three selected pedagogical universities in line with CBE, gender-responsive, and inclusive education standards. Evidence-based recommendations and a detailed national framework for the development of revised pre-service teacher education programmes are developed and submitted for formal endorsement by the relevant ministries.
- Institutional coordination mechanisms between the MoE, MoHESI, and universities are established and operationalized to support continuous reform and quality assurance of pre-service teacher education.
- A structured roadmap for the revision, piloting, approval, and institutionalization of CBE-aligned, inclusive and gender-responsive pre-service teacher education programmes is produced.

**Activity 2.2.2:** *Support the implementation of continuous professional development (CPD) of teachers*

**Objective:** *Provide practical, accessible, and relevant professional development to current teachers. By using a modern blended-learning format, it helps them immediately apply new CBE and inclusive approaches in their daily work without long absences from the classroom.*

**Key tasks:**

1. Conduct capacity building for national experts of the Working Group under the Republican In-service Teacher Training University and the core assigned team of the MoSHEI, MoE and other relevant institutions on functional review of existing CPD programmes, in line with CBE, gender-responsive and inclusive education principles, and informed by international best practices and national education reform priorities.
2. Provide technical support, including development of standardized criteria, methodology, monitoring and quality assurance tools, to the national Working Group to conduct a functional review of existing CPD programmes and modules.
3. Develop a detailed technical plan and content guidelines for new blended-learning CPD modules, including digital delivery modalities.
4. Develop evidence-based recommendations and a national roadmap for the rollout and institutionalization of the modernized CPD framework, including guidance on course design, content, and delivery modalities (online, offline, and blended).

#### **Expected Results:**

- Ministry of Education and Republican In-service Teacher Training University demonstrate strengthened capacity in applying competency-based methodologies for functional review and modernization of CPD programmes, informed by international best practices and national education reform priorities.
- National Working Groups are technically equipped with standardized criteria, methodologies, monitoring and quality assurance tools to conduct functional reviews of CPD programmes.
- A validated Functional Review Report of the national CPD system is completed, highlighting requirements for CBE alignment.
- A new framework for CBE-aligned, gender-responsive and inclusive CPD programmes — including blended-learning specifications— is developed subject to the endorsement by the Ministry of Education.
- Standardized tools for the monitoring and evaluation of CPD effectiveness in classroom settings are institutionalized.
- A National Roadmap for the scale-up of modern CPD modules across the teaching workforce is produced.

To achieve the desired results, it is strongly recommended to ensure effective collaborative work processes between all above-mentioned outcomes and activities. These processes should be carefully designed to address critical gaps, enhance project outcomes, and align with the established objectives and deliverables.

#### **5. Deliverables and payment schedule**

<b>#</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Duration (days)</b>	<b>Payment Schedule (%)</b>
1	Inception Report	Comprehensive report including a detailed consultancy workplan, refined methodology for the functional reviews across all three sub-streams (TLM, Pre-service, CPD), a risk mitigation strategy, and a mapping of national working groups	10	20%
2	Capacity Building Modules and	Submission of training packages and validated technical tools (rubrics, observation protocols,	60	20%

	Standardized Review Tools	and quality assurance criteria) for the functional review of Kyrgyz Language/Geography TLMs, university curricula, and CPD programs		
3	Consolidated Functional Review Reports	Comprehensive analytical reports covering: (a) Existing TLMs for Kyrgyz Language/Geography; (b) Pre-service programs in 3 universities; and (c) National CPD systems.	120	50%
4	Draft Frameworks and Roadmaps	Draft National CBE Frameworks for TLMs, revised pre-service curricula models, and blended learning CPD plans, including implementation roadmaps.	130	
5	Final Validated Roadmaps, Presentation and Completion Report	Finalized and endorsed national roadmaps for the rollout and institutionalization of CBE reforms, including the final consultancy report and a high-level presentation to the MoE and UNICEF.	60	10%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>380</b>	<b>100%</b>

Payment to the institutional consultancy services will be done based on the deliverables and agreed timelines for those, subject to satisfactory contract performance. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work is incomplete, not delivered, or for failure to meet deadlines.

## 6. Management and supervision and reporting requirements

Supervisors: Education Officer

in close consultation with the Chief of Education Section, UNICEF CoE on Education

The consultancy company will work closely with:

- Ministry of Education
- Local education authorities
- Selected pilot schools
- UNICEF technical teams
- Programme Management Unit for the SmartEd Project

The institutional consultancy should prepare and submit quarterly and annual reports that clearly and consistently cover achievements against the deliverables under each lot. The reporting schedule should be discussed with the lead UNICEF officer to ensure alignment with the MOE and PMU/IsDB timelines.

Types of reports to be submitted is described below. The exact number of the reports should be included in the proposed methodology.

- Progress report
- Training packages
- Course materials
- Presentation materials
- Testing and piloting reports

The reports should be submitted to UNICEF and the MoE in English and Russian languages. The reports will be reviewed, and feedback provided by UNICEF. The company will be required to present the contents and findings of some of the reports to relevant stakeholders, including Local Education Group.

## 7. Methodology

The institutional consultancy is expected to mobilize a multidisciplinary team of international experts ensuring coherence across TLM development, pre-service reform, and CPD system strengthening. National consultants based on different sub-activities will be recruited by UNICEF Kyrgyzstan to support the efforts of the international team across all areas.

The methodology must ensure that the "Functional Review" results (Deliverable 3) serve as the mandatory evidence base for the "CBE Frameworks" (Deliverable 4), preventing fragmented policy development.

**Parallel Expert Deployment:** The consultancy must deploy subject-matter experts in TLM, Pre-service reform, and CPD systems simultaneously, ensuring that capacity-building tools are developed in a standardized format to allow for cross-sectoral analysis.

**Institutional Sustainability:** A "mentorship-led" approach is required where the consultancy does not work in isolation but empowers national working groups to conduct the reviews, ensuring the methodology is institutionalized within the MoE and MoSHEI.

**Inclusion Standard:** All technical outputs—including analytical tools and capacity-building modules—must explicitly integrate gender-responsive and inclusive education principles.

**Location:** The selected institution will undertake the assignment remotely for preparations, reviews and development of the drafts. Country/field visits (Bishkek mostly, but a few trips to 1-2 other regions might be required as per the MOE request) will be required for consultations, data/information collection, capacity building and technical support to the deliverables by the national Working Groups for each sub-component. All travel and the related budget should be part of the proposal. The partner institution will be responsible for administering its own travel and will be responsible for all travel costs including flights, daily subsistence allowance, etc.

## 8. Qualification requirements/specialised knowledge/experience required to complete the task

The Tenderer must satisfy the following requirements:

- Technical expertise and at least 8 years of proven work experience in a relevant field, with focus on reforms in pre-service and in-service teacher training, curriculum, competency-based Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) and strengthening of CPD systems aligned to Competency-based Education (CBE).
- Experience in capacity building for the national governments on curriculum and TLM reform, CBE, teacher training, etc.
- Demonstrated experience of developing high-quality reports and products related to TLMs, teacher education and support for technical and non-technical audiences.
- Successful experience as prime contractor in the execution of at least 3 successful projects (contracts) of complexity comparable to the proposed contract within the last 3 (three) years;
- The Tenderer shall provide at least 3 (three) customer-signed project references of national and/or international successfully implemented surveys and/or consultancy services;

- Experience working with UN agencies or international organizations is an asset.

**Team Leader/Chief Expert:**

- Minimum education requirement: PhD degree in education and social sciences.
- Minimum 10 years of experience working on education reform in particularly at competency-based TLM frameworks, reform of pre-service teacher education programmes and strengthening of CPD systems aligned to Competency-based Education (CBE)
- Excellent oral and written communications skills and proficient in word processing, PowerPoint and spread sheets;
- Minimum of 3 years of experience in supervisory/managerial positions; and
- Minimum of 5 years of experience in dealing/liaising with international.

**Qualification for education experts/specialists**

**Experts (including subject specialists and institutional/systems analysts)** who will work closely with the Team Leader to design and deliver the assignment including country consultations, technical analysis, desk review, and report finalization.

Institution/firm to propose the experts required for the assignment keeping in mind; (i) the technical aspects of subject/domain knowledge as well as expertise required for systems/institutional analysis, and (ii) the time for completing the deliverables with the required quality. The experts will have a postgraduate degree in education, assessments, statistics/psychometrics, evaluation, social sciences, or a related field and at least eight years of relevant experience in education.

**Language:** Key members to have fluency in English and members with additional knowledge of Russian are required.

**Request for submission**

- A comprehensive technical proposal with proposed methodology/approach to the activities and expected results, showing understanding of the tasks and work plan (no price information should be contained in the technical proposal) including proposed management of the tasks/activities. The proposed team shall include a Team Leader/Chief Expert with expert(s) for each component.
- A copy of the organization profile.
- The proposed technical team curriculum vitae (CVs).
- A sample of previous work undertaken in the last three years.
- Tax registration (INN) and certified audited financial reports of last 2 years issues by tax authorities.
- Detailed information on minimum 3 contracts in supplying similar services over the past 3 years (experience with international organizations is an asset)
- Three recommendation letters or list of contact persons (organization, name, contacts, address) for references related to the previous similar contracts.

**15. Evaluation process and methods**

The evaluation of proposals will be conducted in three phases.

1. Preliminary review for completeness of required documentation.
2. Technical Evaluation of technical proposals (80% out of 100%).
3. Financial Evaluation of the financial proposals (20% out of 100%).

1. Preliminary review: All the proposals received will be checked for completeness and compliance. The technical proposal must be separated from the financial proposal. Proposals that do not meet the preliminary review will be invalidated and not considered for technical evaluation.

2. Technical Evaluation: All the proposals that meet the preliminary requirements will be evaluated technically. The maximum score is 80 points and the minimum passing score is 64 points. In making the final decision, UNICEF considers both technical and financial aspects. The Evaluation Team first reviews the technical aspect of the offer followed by the review of the financial offer of the technically compliant vendors. Each proposal shall be evaluated based on the technical evaluation criteria and bidders' qualifications listed below.

**Technical evaluation:**

The proposals will be evaluated against the following technical criteria:

Item	Technical Evaluation Criteria/Qualifications	Max. Points
1	Overall Response	20
1.1	Completeness of the proposal and responsiveness to the TOR. Quality of the proposed methodology, detailed timeline, consultations, data collection, analysis methods and presentation. The proposal should detail the proposed approaches based on the TOR requirements. <b>(20 pts)</b>	
2	Capability and Key Personnel	30
2.1	Above 8 years of relevant experience in technical assistance, system reform, programme design, development of analytical reports, preferably in UNICEF areas of programming, and experience in Kyrgyzstan or Central Asia <b>(5 pts)</b>	
2.2	Experience in education field, with focus on reforms in in-service and preservice teacher training, curriculum, TLMs and textbooks, pre-service teacher training, development of courses on pedagogy and introduction of blended learning modalities of delivery. <b>(10 pts)</b>	
2.3	Demonstrate strong knowledge of CBE pedagogy, education course design, teacher preparation and curriculum, etc. <b>(10 pts)</b>	
2.4	Knowledge of human rights-based approach to programming, gender equality, inclusive education equity approach, programming and analysis. <b>(5 pts)</b>	
3	Organizational Experience in the field of education	30
3.1	Track record and organisational experience of similar projects/assignments related to provision of technical support for strengthening overall education reform and learning assessments including analysis, design and implementation. <b>(20 pts)</b>	
3.2	Assessment of key considerations relevant to the ethical concerns, potential risks and threats, and proposed mitigation plans <b>(10 pts)</b>	
	Total Technical Score	80

Only Proposers obtaining a minimum of 64 points in Technical Criteria evaluation will be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

**16. Financial Proposal Evaluation**

Interested bidders are required to submit on a separate email their financial offer which should detail the rate per technical team member in relation to the number of days the team member will work on the project. Include the cost of services per quarter related to deliverables and dedicated human

resources, such as overall management and technical specialists. The financial proposal shall be submitted using Annex C – Financial Proposal Template.

All travel and the related budget should be part of the proposal. The partner institution will be responsible for administering its own travel and will be responsible for all travel costs including flights, daily subsistence allowance, etc.

The price of each of the technically compliant proposals shall be considered only after evaluation of the above technical criteria. A maximum 20 point assigned to the financial proposal will be allocated to the lowest financial proposal. As a result of the financial evaluation, the points of each proposal will be taken into further consideration in the final evaluation.

The bidders should ensure that all pricing information is provided in accordance with the following:

- a) The currency of the proposal shall be in USD for international companies and invoicing must be in the same currency.
- b) All prices/rates quoted must be exclusive of all taxes as UNICEF is a tax-exempt organization

### **17. Award of Contract**

UNICEF will make an institutional contract award to a bidder who submitted a highly technically compliant proposal. The awards will be made starting from the highest-scoring proposal as a result of the combined technical and financial evaluation scores. Overall, the awards shall depend on several criteria, including the needs, prices offered and what provided the best value for money, and is in the best interests of UNICEF.