**PRIMARY EDUCATION IMROVEMENT PROJECT (PEIP)**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Social Specialist**

**1. Background of the Project**

The Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP) development objective is to improve conditions for learning in primary education in North Macedonia.

The Project would support the Government of North Macedonia’s initiatives geared to:

* improve learning environment at the primary level;
* improve quality of teaching practices; and
* implement school improvement plans that use performance data and monitoring tools for improving student learning.

The project will be organized around three main elements that need to be aligned in order to be complementary to each other. Component 1 focuses on school-level interventions, which are closest to students and most likely to impact learning while also mitigating and recovering learning losses generated by COVID-19. Two enabling elements are system-level reforms that would create the necessary enabling conditions so the school teachers are empowered with data on learning and up-to-date training. Component 2 would develop a comprehensive national assessment program to inform both school improvement planning and professional development programs, serving to link the school and system levels. Component 3 would put into practice professional competences for educators. Together, these elements will provide adequate information, tools, training and support to create effective and improved conditions for learning and ultimately increase student achievement. Component 4 would strengthen sector management, project management and monitoring and evaluation. The legal framework for implementation of above-mentioned reform interventions was recently adopted and there is an adequate institutional set up to embed them and eventually further enhance. The project activities are targeted toward building the foundation of a modern and efficient primary education system that is orienting all parts of the system toward learning.

The Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) is the main implementing agency of the Project in close cooperation with the National Examination Center (NEC), Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) and State Educational Inspectorate (SEI). Projects direct beneficiaries will include primary education students, but focused support will be given those who are vulnerable (Roma, girls, students disproportionally affected by the closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic) which are expected to benefit from improved learning and physical environment in the schools as well as from better-trained teachers. Primary education teachers, school principals, and MPSTs will benefit from more efficient professional development and career advancement, teaching adds, and grant program to implement their school improvement plans. The project activities are targeted toward building the foundation of a modern and efficient primary education system that is orienting all parts of the system toward learning.

**2. Objective of the assignment**

The objective is to hire an individual consultant to provide assistance and support to the MOES through critical inputs for inclusion of vulnerable categories of students in implementation of PEIP.

**3. Scope of work**

**The Consultant shall be is responsible for:**

* Providing technical support to the Ministry of Education and Science in the process of inclusion of vulnerable categories of students in education policy development and implementation;
* Development of quality assurance standards for evaluation and accreditation of education institutions, providing related input regarding the education financing models with the accent of inclusion of vulnerable categories of students;
* Assist in all MoES and project related activities with regards to social and inclusion aspects of the education policy development and project implementation;
* Providing assistance and coordination in the efforts of various stakeholders (NGOs, parents, student unions, etc.) with respect to ensuring their adequate representation and impact in outlining the social component of education policy development;
* Organize meetings and workshops related to inclusion of vulnerable categories in the project activities;
* Any other activities related to the implementation of PEIP and MoES operation.

**2. Reporting obligations**

The consultant shall report to the Project Director. Upon request by the Project Director and/or the Minister of Education and Science the Consultant shall produce and submit progress reports for the implementation of the Project activities.

**3. Minimum qualifications of the consultant**

The Consultant should have the following experience and qualifications:

* University Degree in social sciences;
* At least five years of relevant experience in the area of social services development;
* Experience in activities/projects involving vulnerable categories such as women, Roma girls etc.
* Knowledge of the Macedonian public sector and up to date knowledge of the state of the ongoing and proposed reforms in the Human development sector will be considered as an advantage;
* Experience in work with International Organization will be considered as an advantage;
* Full computer literacy (MS Office)
* Excellent verbal and writing communication skills in Macedonian and English.

**4. Duration of assignment**

The Consultant will work under a time-based contract. The assignment will be full time, working 8 hours a day on the regular business days in North Macedonia. The contract for this assignment will be until 27 February 2026. A downstream work might be needed, subject to Client's business needs under the project and subject to consultant's satisfactory performance.