

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Financial Management Specialist within
Education Quality Improvement Project (EQIP)

Education Quality Improvement Project

Credit No.IBRD-9536-MD

Reference No.: MD-PIU-NORLD-378857-CS-INDV

Date: January 3, 2024

Assignment Title: Financial Management Specialist to provide technical support and assist the NORLD in procurement activities related to „Education Quality Improvement Project”.

The National Office for Regional and Local Development (NODRL) has received financing from the World Bank Group toward the cost of the Education Quality Improvement Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for individual consulting services.).**The main objective** of the FM Specialist is to work on financial management and disbursement procedures, administration of funds, and financial reporting.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at the following website: <https://ondrl.gov.md> or can be obtained at the address given below.

The NORLD now invites eligible Individual Consultants (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The individual consultant to be hired based on these Terms of Reference shall:

- Develop the Project accounting system in accordance with Bank and Government accounting, reporting and auditing requirements, subsequently operate and update the system as necessary;
- Keep detailed Project accounts for IBRD Loan and Grants funds in accordance with Bank and Government accounting and auditing requirements, using the above developed accounting system and the national accounting system of the MoER;
- Prepare quarterly and annual Project budgets, and monitor budget execution and submit to the MoER;
- Prepare and submit to MoER regular disbursement forecasts for the Bank and national authorities;
- Prepare and submit to MoER regular Project financial statements (quarterly or monthly, if necessary) in accordance with Bank and Government reporting requirements;
- Prepare and submit to MoER all Financial Monitoring Reports, disbursement documents and documents for supplementing the Designated Account;
- Set up and keep detailed financial records in accordance with the methodological rules on accounting and financial reporting in the budgetary system for easy access by the Bank supervision mission and auditors;
- Carry out any other activities related to Project financing and reporting as indicated by the Project Manager;

- Keep evidence of goods received from each supplier, according to Moldovan law. The evidence will be done by items and amounts – how many goods were received and how much was paid. To calculate the balance for each supplier at the end of each month;
- Provide guidance and support to the sub-project beneficiaries on project financial management matters and provide FM training if required;
- Collect and keep copies of the sub-project financial documentation for each beneficiary;
- Verify the financial reports prepared and consolidate the information contained there into overall project financial statements. The information is further submitted to MoER;
- Collaborate with the MoER, Treasury, record of consultancy contracts and payments;
- Keep the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Finance;
- Prepare quarterly and annual financial reports for the Ministry of Finance and share them with the Administrative Financial Department of the NORLD;
- Prepare project annual financial statements for an independent financial audit; coordination of audit activities and cooperation with the auditor and MoER;
- Follow up on audit recommendations, prepare an Action Plan and share it with the MoER;
- Collaborate with the Bank missions in conducting regular oversight of the financial management of the project and in responding properly to comments and recommendations made.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the „Open Competitive Selection of Individual Consultants” method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 09:00 to 16:00 hours.

The applications should include a letter of Expression of Interest, CV, and related recommendation letters, if any, together with a copy of CV in WORD format. Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by **January 17, 2024**, 16:00 o'clock, **Moldova time**, indicating the assignment title in the subject line.

National Office for Regional and Local Development,
Stefan cel Mare 124, 3th floor,
mun. Chisinau, Republic of Moldova MD-2004
Tel/fax: 022 27 91 21
E-mail: office@ondrl.gov.md

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

**EDUCATION QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
NATIONAL OFFICE FOR REGIONAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST**

A. BACKGROUND

„Education Quality Improvement” Project (EQIP) is a World Bank (hereinafter “the Bank”) - financed Project to be implemented between June 2023 and December 2029.

The total cost of the Project is US\$59.8 million equivalent comprising (i) a non-concessional portion in the amount of EUR36.5 million (US\$40 million equivalent) and (ii) a concessional portion in the amount of US\$10 million under the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) on a non-reimbursable basis (Loan No. IBRD 9536-MD), (iii) a grant in the amount of US\$5 million from the Early Learning Partnership Multi-Donor Trust Fund (TF0C1507) and (iv) a grant in the amount of US\$4.8 million from the Global Partnership for Education Fund (TF0C1484).

The project development objectives are to: (i) improve the learning environment in Participating Institutions, with an emphasis on supporting Disadvantaged Students; and (ii) strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Research for sector management and refugee response. The Project is organized around four components, and its objectives will be achieved through improved teacher practices, a learning recovery program for disadvantaged students, an improved learning environment in targeted schools and preschools, and the development of the institutional capacity to design, implement and evaluate education reforms and refugee response interventions. The proposed Contingent Emergency Response Component under fourth part will support the country’s future response in the event of a natural or manmade disaster or emergency.

The EQIP components are described below:

1. *Component 1* - Improve Quality of Teaching Practices. This component aims to (i) improve the quality of teaching; (ii) develop, pilot, and implement a rapid formative assessment, a Learning Recovery Program, and a supplemental tutoring for Disadvantaged Students; and (iii) develop School Subprojects through the provision of School Grants to support in-service teacher professional development opportunities.
2. *Component 2* – Improve the Quality of Learning Environment in Participating Institutions. This component aims to improve the learning environment of Participating Institutions through (i) equipping the Participating Institutions; (ii) carrying out civil works for the rehabilitation of Participating Institutions and Selected ECEC Facilities; and (iii) construction of three (3) high schools in Priority Areas.
3. *Component 3* – Strengthening the Capacity for Education Sector Management and Refugee Response. This component would support (i) improvement in planning, management, and evaluation of education reforms and (ii) Project Management.
4. *Component 4* – Contingent Emergency Response. This component will provide immediate response to an Eligible Crisis or Emergency, as needed, in case a natural or man-made disaster or emergency arises.

The Ministry of Education and Research (MoER) would be responsible for overall Project implementation, while the National Office for Regional and Local Development (NORLD) would implement activities related to civil works.

In this context, a Financial Management Specialist will be hired to assist and provide technical support to the NORLD Project Management Team (PMT) in order to perform all relevant financial procedures related to the Project under NORLD responsibility and to ensure systematic financial arrangements during the project implementation.

B. OBJECTIVE OF THE CONSULTANCY

The main objective of the consultancy is to provide technical support and assist the NORLD in activities related to Project activities under NORLD responsibility in accordance with the Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD), Project Procurement Plan and the Project Implementation Plan (PIP).

The main objective of the consultancy is to work on financial management and disbursement procedures, administration of funds, and financial reporting and assist the NORLD in activities related to Project activities under NORLD responsibility in accordance with the Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD), Project Procurement Plan and the Project Implementation Plan (PIP).

C. SPECIFIC TASKS

The individual consultant to be hired based on these Terms of Reference shall:

- Advise Project Manager (PM) and NORLD Director and relevant staff on the financial related matters and assist the PM with communicating to the Project Coordinator on the issues related to financial management;
- In cooperation with the PM and implementing departments, update on a regular basis the Project Procurement Plan and submit it to the Bank for review and approval through the Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP);
- In cooperation with NORLD carry out the related procurement activities in accordance with the World Bank 'Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers: Procurement in IPF of Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services', dated November 2020 (the Procurement Regulations), as well as with the latest Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.
- Develop the Project accounting system in accordance with Bank and Government accounting, reporting and auditing requirements, subsequently operate and update the system as necessary;
- Keep detailed Project accounts for IBRD Loan and Grants funds in accordance with Bank and Government accounting and auditing requirements, using the above developed accounting system and the national accounting system of the MoER;
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D. DURATION

This is a assignment which is to begin after effectiveness of the project, expected in January 2024. The contract will be signed for a period of 12 months. Subject to Consultant's satisfactory performance, the contract may be renewed until the Closing Date of the project on December 31, 2029.

CONSULTANT'S REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

The consultant to be hired in accordance with the proposed assignment should prepare monthly reports on all activities performed. The consultant will report directly to NORLD Project Manager.

The NORLD and Project team will provide the Consultant with necessary support to complete the assignment: project documents necessary for assignment accomplishment, necessary work conditions, including office space, telephone, fax and other office equipment and supplies.

E. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND BASIS FOR EVALUATION (EVALUATION CRITERIA)

The Consultant should meet the following mandatory qualifications:

- University degree in economics, accounting, finance or related fields;
- Working experience with international organizations and / or similar projects for at least 2 years;

- At least 5 years of previous work experience in accounting/financial management;
- Knowledge of international and national accounting standards;
- Minimum 2 years of experience in projects financed by international financial organizations
- Fluent in Romanian;
- Knowledge of English will be an advantage;
- Computer proficiency (1C, Windows, MS Office, Internet Explorer);
- Knowledge of education and construction sector will be an advantage.

F. Confidentially statement

All data and information received from NORLD for the purpose of this assignment is to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to NORLD. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization of the NORLD.