

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Procurement Consultant within
Education Quality Improvement Project (EQIP)

Republic of Moldova
Education Quality Improvement Project
Credit No. IBRD-9536-MD
Reference No.: MD-PIU-NORLD-378857-CS-INDV
Date: January 3, 2024

Assignment Title: Procurement Specialist to provide technical support and assist the NORLD in procurements 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 consultancy is to provide technical support and assist the NORLD in procurements 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 detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at the following <https://ondrl.gov.md/categorie/functii-vacante/> 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 attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank *Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers – Procurement in Investment Project Financing. Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services* dated November 2023 (hereinafter referred to as “Procurement Regulations”) setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest and with the latest *Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits*.

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 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\$ 59.8million 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 Procurement Specialist will be hired to assist and provide technical support to the NORLD Project Management Team (PMT) in order to perform all relevant procurement procedures related to the Project under NORLD responsibility and to ensure systematic procurement 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 procurements 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:

- a) Advise Project Manager (PM) and NORLD Director and relevant staff on the procurement related matters and assist the PM with communicating to the Project Coordinator on the issues related to procurement;
- b) 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);
- c) 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.

The actions to be taken envisage the implementation of the following main activities:

- Preparation of procurement documents with technical input from NORLD;
 - Launch the procurements process and ensure advertising;
 - Organize and oversee clarification meetings (if applicable);
 - Ensure clarifications to Bids/Proposal are distributed;
 - Organize logistics for Bid/Proposal submission;
 - Oversee and organize logistics concerning evaluation;
 - Prepare and submit the evaluation reports to the Bank (for prior review activities) with technical input from the NORLD;
 - Prepare the draft contracts;
 - Participate in contract negotiations;
 - Monitor contract implementation with support from PM;
 - Keep procurement documents in prescribed way and for prescribed period;
 - Carry out other assignments and activities related to the Project implementation within his/her competence upon request of the PM.
- d) Liaise with beneficiary departments / institutions to finalize technical specifications for goods and services to be procured for them and assure that technical specifications are vendor neutral;
 - e) In cooperation with the PM and NORLD implementing departments prepare regular procurement monitoring reports for the NORLD and the Bank (as part of regular project progress reports).

D. DURATION

This is an 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:

- Higher education degree in economics, law, public administration, or related field;
- Proven expertise and knowledge of the Bank or similar international organizations/agencies procurement rules and procedures;
- At least 3 years of working experience in the field of procurement in projects financed by the Bank or other international organizations/agencies;
- Practical experience of procurement in public institutions and organizations or enterprises will be considered an advantage;
- Excellent knowledge of Romanian (both written and oral);
- At least intermediate level of English language proficiency;
- Knowledge of STEP would be an asset;
- Excellent knowledge of common PC office tools.

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.