

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
for Consulting Services (Individual Consultant)

**Head of Early Childhood Education Development Office**

LEARN-IC-ECEDO-01

Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine Program  
URTF Grant No. TF0C5794

## **I. Background**

The Government of Ukraine is implementing a comprehensive reform of the education sector aimed at strengthening teaching and learning conditions and enhancing management capacities across all levels of education. The Government are also implementing transformational new Early Childhood and Preschool Education (ECPE) reforms – key to the EU accession, approved after the Program became effective. These reforms aim to deregulate the rigid preschool sector and promote a play-based, child-centered pedagogy consistent with the global evidence base. Implementing the new Preschool Law is a key action for Ukraine's EU accession under Chapter 26 of the 2024 EU Enlargement Report and is now being operationalized through “First Steps Forward: Strategic Framework for Early Childhood and Preschool Education (ECPE) in Ukraine,” new decrees (regulatory acts) and additional budget allocations. These reforms, which are the most transformative in over three decades—will be implemented in a two-phased approach. The first phase involves developing the capacity on the national and local levels to implement reforms on a small scale (approx. 35 hromadas) together with a rigorous process evaluation to inform scale-up. The second phase will involve implementing the “First Steps Forward Strategy” at a national level. In addition, with ECPE as a priority under SAP and a key policy action under the National Demographic Strategy. To support this reform agenda, approved after LEARN became effective, the government requested additional resources be allocated to the Technical Assistance (TA) (Investment Project Financing - IPF) component of LEARN to support the first phase of the ECPE reform before moving to new disbursement-linked indicators (DLIs).

Central to this effort is the World Bank–supported (Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine) LEARN Operation, which advances the State Education Sector Development Strategy, New Ukrainian School (NUS) and Early Childhood Education reform.

The objectives of the Operation are: to (i) improve teaching and learning conditions; and (ii) strengthen the management capacity of the education system. The Operation’s total financing is US\$451 million using a combination of the World Bank's financial instruments: Program-for-Results (PforR) complemented by Investment Project Financing (IPF).

US\$31.1 million in Additional Financing was recently approved through grant resources, consisting of US\$30.0 million from the Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction, and Reform Multi-Donor Trust Fund and US\$1.1 million from the Global Partnership for Education Fund. This additional financing is formalized under the Grant Agreement between Ukraine and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association, jointly acting as a Supervising Entity for the Global Partnership for Education Fund and as administrator of the Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction, and

Reform Multi-Donor Trust Fund (URTF GRANT NUMBER TF0D0612; GPE GRANT NUMBER TF0D0613), and supports activities related to the continued implementation of the Program.

The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) has established the Early Childhood Education Development Office (ECEDO). Operating as a technical implementation office within the Ministry, ECEDO delivers operational and technical support for coordinating overall reform activities across several areas, including access and financing, curriculum and teacher professional development, inclusion, quality assurance, legal and regulatory frameworks, and cross-sectoral collaboration. It will also be responsible for overseeing LEARN ECPE activities. The creation of ECEDO strengthens MoES's ability to manage donor-funded technical assistance, provide support to participating hromadas, ensure alignment across reform components, and integrate project outcomes into national systems to promote long-term sustainability and scalability.

## II. Objectives

The objective of this assignment is to lead and coordinate the activities of the ECEDO to ensure effective, coherent, and results-oriented implementation of the First Steps Forward strategy in line with national priorities. The assignment also aims to support sustainability and national-level scalability of reform interventions through strong coordination, quality assurance, and institutional integration within MoES.

## III. Scope of Work

### 1. Overall Leadership and Coordination

- Lead the ECEDO and coordinate implementation of the First Steps Forward strategy.
- Ensure coherence and alignment across all ECEDO technical and cross-sectoral expert teams.

### 2. Management of ECEDO Operations

- Oversee planning, implementation, and performance of ECEDO workplans, ensuring timely delivery of agreed outputs.
- Supervise ECEDO team leads and experts, ensuring clear responsibilities, coordination, and accountability

### 3. Manage the implementation of LEARN activities, including:

- **Implementation of the first phase of “First Steps Forward”** in selected hromadas to expand access, safety, quality, and inclusivity of ECPE services, including to:
  - Ensure **transparent selection and effective oversight** of participating hromadas, prioritizing implementation readiness, access gaps, and local labor-market needs.
  - Supervise the development and implementation of the **technical assistance and training** for local governments to assess ECPE supply–demand gaps and develop hromada-level implementation plans.

- Oversee the development and implementation of **training of ECPE educators** (public and private) on the new curriculum and standards, play-based pedagogy, trauma-sensitive practices, and inclusive education for children with SEN.
- Supervise **upgrading of ECPE learning environments and IRC capacity**, including procurement of equipment and goods to improve accessibility and learning conditions, including in shelters.
- Lead **monitoring, learning, and process evaluation** of first-phase implementation and translate lessons learned into recommendations for national scale-up.
- **At the national level:**
  - Manage the **design and implementation of national-level training** for ECPE and IRC staff.
  - Oversee **strengthening of ECPE data and information systems**, including integration of preschool education into national education management platforms.

#### 4. Institutional and Partner Coordination

- Serve as the main coordination point between ECEDO, MoES directorates, the LEARN Project Coordinator, and the World Bank Operations Management Unit.
- Ensure structured coordination with World bank, UNICEF and other development partners to support complementarity and avoid duplication.

#### 5. Oversight of Results, Quality, and Risks

- Monitor overall project progress and risks, ensuring that monitoring, evaluation, and quality assurance mechanisms are in place and used.
- Support evidence-based decision-making using implementation data and feedback.
- Verify the monthly reports of the ECDO office.

#### 6. Reporting and Accountability

- Ensure preparation and submission of monthly progress reports and timesheets in line with LEARN and World Bank requirements.
- Represent ECEDO in coordination meetings and technical discussions as requested by MoES.
- Ensure internal accountability within ECEDO by coordinating team inputs, monitoring progress against approved workplans and deliverables, and reporting risks or delays to MoES as required.

#### 6. Sustainability and Institutionalisation

- Ensure that ECEDO's technical functions, tools, and knowledge are progressively integrated into MoES structures.
- Support preparation for national-level scale-up of First Steps Forward interventions.

#### **IV. Reporting and Coordination Arrangements**

- The Head of ECEDO reports to the LEARN Project Coordinator.
- The Head of ECEDO works in close coordination with the Line Deputy Minister responsible for Preschool Education and other Deputy Ministers, as required.
- For operational and fiduciary matters, the Head of ECEDO works in coordination with the Head of the World Bank Operations Management Unit (Project Implementing Unit).
- The Consultant shall submit monthly reports in hard copy, including a description of services provided during the reporting period and timesheets.

#### **V. Duration and Modality of Assignment**

- The Consultant shall provide his/her services until December 31, 2028.
- The Consultant is expected to provide services remotely; however, upon MoES request, the Consultant must be able to arrive and/or provide services at MoES premises as soon as possible.

#### **VI. Language Requirements**

- Fluency in Ukrainian and professional proficiency in English are required.

#### **VII. Provided Resources**

- The Consultant shall provide his/her services on a full-time basis.
- The Consultant should be required and expected to undertake business trips to other regions of Ukraine to support implementation of the Project.

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

- Master's degree or higher in Education, Public Administration, Economics, Policy Studies, Early Childhood Development, or a related social sector field.
- At least 5 years of progressively responsible experience in managing large-scale education or social sector reforms, programs, or projects.
- Demonstrated experience in leading multidisciplinary teams and coordinating across government institutions, development partners, and stakeholders.
- Proven track record in strategic planning, project management, and oversight of policy implementation in the education sector.
- Strong understanding of early childhood education systems, decentralization policies, and public sector governance in Ukraine.
- Experience working with World Bank-, UNICEF-, EU-, USAID-, or other donor-funded programs, including familiarity with reporting, fiduciary, and results frameworks.
- Excellent leadership, negotiation, and communication skills.

#### **IX. Desirable Skills and Qualifications**

- Prior experience in establishing or supervising project implementation units, reform support teams, or technical assistance offices.

- Advanced knowledge of public finance, results-based management, monitoring and evaluation, or quality assurance systems in education.
- Experience facilitating cross-ministerial collaboration, including with health, social protection, digital transformation, or regional administrations.
- Strong political economy awareness and ability to operate in complex governance environments.
- Experience in donor coordination, institutional capacity building, and change management.
- Strong analytical and policy writing skills, with the ability to translate evidence into decision-ready recommendations.

## **X. Application Package**

Interested persons should submit their CVs in Ukrainian and English to the following email address: [oleksandr.radchenko@uiherp.org](mailto:oleksandr.radchenko@uiherp.org). Please indicate the email subject line as: «**LEARN: Selection of the Head of ECEDO: [NAME]**»

The deadline for submission of documents is **11:00 am Kyiv time, March 12, 2026**.

If the Consultant fails to provide CVs in both languages, the Client reserves the right to reject the application.