

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

**Senior Communication Expert**  
Early Childhood Education Development Office (ECEDO)

LEARN-IC-ECEDO-15  
Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine Program  
URTF Grant No. TF0D0612

**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, which is one of the key tasks on the path of Ukraine's accession to the EU. With the adoption in 2024 of the new [Law of Ukraine "On Preschool Education"](#), which entered into force on January 1, 2025, active transformation processes have also covered preschool education.

Early childhood and preschool education ranks first among the strategic priorities identified by the [Strategic Action Plan of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine until 2027](#), approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated March 7, 2024 No. 276. The ultimate goal of the reform is to ensure access to quality preschool education for every child, including children with special educational needs, which is planned to be achieved through a number of the following strategic goals: accessibility, highly qualified and motivated staff, compliance of the quality and content of education with European requirements, the functioning of effective systems for monitoring and assessing quality, management and financing.

[The European Commission's Communication on the EU's Enlargement Policy for 2024](#) notes the steps taken as achieving some progress. It emphasizes the next task of ensuring the implementation of the legislation on preschool education, which puts in place measures aligning to EU principles and focuses on high-quality early childhood education, guaranteeing access for children of early and preschool age, fair rules for the functioning of preschool entities, and decent working conditions for employees.

Implementation of this reform is also accompanied by the development of the draft Strategy for preschool education development presented during the event "[First Steps Forward](#)", new secondary legislation, and additional budget allocations.

These reforms, which are the most transformative in more than three decades, will be implemented in two phases. The first phase involves developing capacity at the national and local levels for implementation of reforms on a limited scale, approximately 35 territorial communities (hromadas), combined with a rigorous process evaluation to prepare for scale up. The second phase involves implementation of the Strategy at the national level.

To support the first stage of the preschool education reform, the Government requested additional resources under the Technical Assistance component, Investment Project Financing, of "Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine" (LEARN) project.

In 2024, Ukraine and the World Bank signed agreements on the Operation “Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine” (LEARN).

The LEARN objectives are: (i) to improve teaching and learning conditions; and (ii) to strengthen the management capacity of the education system. The total LEARN financing amounts to US\$737 million and is provided through a combination of World Bank financing instruments: Program for Results (PforR) and Investment Project Financing (IPF).

The Program-for-Results (PforR) is implemented through a US\$235 million credit provided by Bank resources, supported by credit enhancement from the Advancing Needed Credit Enhancement for Ukraine (ADVANCE Ukraine) Trust Fund, which is backed by the Government of Japan. This is formalized under the Financing Agreement between Ukraine and the International Development Association for the Program ([CREDIT No 9721-UA](#)). An additional US\$150 million is provided under the Special Program for Ukraine and Moldova Recovery (SPUR) of the International Development Association (IDA) Crisis Facility, as outlined in the Loan Agreement between Ukraine and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for the Program ([LOAN No 7626-UA](#)). On July 1, 2025, the Financing Agreement (Additional Financing: Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine Program) between Ukraine and the International Development Association ([CREDIT No 7905-UA](#)) was signed in the amount of US\$4.9 million. On June 9, 2026, a Loan Agreement (Third Additional Financing for Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine Program) was signed between Ukraine and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Loan No. K019-UA) in the amount of \$286 million.

Furthermore, US\$30 million in Investment Project Financing (IPF) is secured under the Grant Agreement between Ukraine and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association, acting as the administrator of the Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction, and Reform Multi-Donor Trust Fund ([URTF GRANT No TF0C5794](#)). On December 19, 2025, the Grant Agreement (Additional Financing for Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine Project) 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 ([GPE GRANT No TF0D0613](#), [URTF GRANT No TF0D0612](#)) was signed in the amount of US\$31.1 million.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has established the Early Childhood Education Development Office (ECEDO). Functioning as a technical implementation office within the ministry, ECEDO provides operational and expert support to coordinate overall reform efforts across several areas, including access and financing, content of education and teacher professional development, inclusion, quality assurance, legal and regulatory frameworks, as well as intersectoral cooperation. The office will also be responsible for monitoring the implementation of reforms in the field of Early Childhood and Preschool Education (ECPE). The establishment of ECEDO strengthens the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine to manage donor-funded technical assistance, provide support to participating communities, ensure coherence between reform components, and integrate project results into national systems for long-term sustainability and scalability.

## **II. Objectives**

The objective of this assignment is to lead and coordinate strategic communication for the First Steps Forward project and ECEDO, ensuring clear, coherent, and credible messaging on ECPE reforms across all pillars, audiences, and implementation levels, while supporting transparency, coordination, and national-scale reform implementation.

## **III. Scope of Services**

### **1. Strategic communication leadership**

- Develop and oversee a comprehensive communication approach for the First Steps Forward project and ECEDO, aligned with MoES priorities and LEARN requirements.
- Define key reform narratives, messaging frameworks, and communication priorities for different stakeholder groups (MoES leadership, hromadas, educators, parents, employers, partners, media).

### **2. Cross-pillar coordination and coherence**

- Ensure alignment of communication outputs across all ECEDO pillars (Access & Financing, Content & TPD, Inclusion, Quality Assurance, Legal/Normative, PLS).
- Coordinate closely with the SBC Expert to ensure consistency between reform communication and behavior change messaging, while maintaining clear role differentiation.

### **3. Institutional and partner communication**

- Support MoES and ECEDO leadership in preparing communication materials for high-level meetings, donor engagements, and inter-ministerial coordination.
- Coordinate with UNICEF and other partners' communication teams to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication.

### **4. Communication products and channels**

- Oversee the preparation of communication products such as key messages, briefs, presentations, FAQs, talking points, press materials, and web content related to ECPE reforms.
- Provide quality assurance for communication outputs prepared by consultants, agencies, or partners.

### **5. Risk communication and issue management**

- Support proactive identification of communication risks related to ECPE reforms and propose mitigation strategies.
- Assist MoES and ECEDO in responding to sensitive issues, misinformation, or public concerns related to preschool reforms.

### **6. Monitoring, reporting, and learning**

- Track implementation of communication activities and document outputs, reach, and lessons learned.
- Contribute analytical inputs to project reports and knowledge products to inform national scale-up and future communication efforts.

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

The Consultant reports directly to the Project Coordinator/Co-Coordinator and works under the supervision of the Head of ECEDO, with functional coordination with the Deputy Head for Cross-Sectoral Coordination. The expert works in close collaboration with the SBC Communication Expert, MoES communication units, and relevant ECEDO pillar leads. The Consultant shall submit monthly reports in hard copy.

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

The Consultant shall provide his/her services until December 31, 2028. The Consultant shall provide services under this Contract on an ongoing basis during its term with a level of engagement equivalent to full-time employment, to the extent necessary for the proper

performance of the tasks specified in the Terms of Reference. The Consultant is expected to work primarily remotely, with in-person engagement at MoES premises or events as required.

#### **VI. Minimum Qualification Requirements**

- Master's degree in Communications, Public Policy, Public Administration, Journalism, Education, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- Minimum 5–7 years of professional experience in strategic communication, public sector communication, or reform communication within government or development contexts.
- Demonstrated experience leading communication for large-scale reforms, programs, or donor-funded projects.
- Proven ability to translate complex policy and technical content into clear, accessible messages for diverse audiences.
- Experience working with government institutions and development partners (World Bank, UNICEF, EU, etc.).
- Strong coordination, writing, and presentation skills.
- Fluency in Ukrainian and professional proficiency in English.

#### **VII. Desirable Skills and Qualifications**

- Experience supporting education or social sector reforms, preferably in early childhood or basic education.
- Familiarity with crisis communication, reform resistance, and trust-building strategies in public sector reforms.
- Experience coordinating multi-stakeholder communication efforts across ministries, local governments, and partners.
- Understanding of donor communication and reporting requirements.
- Ability to mentor junior communication staff or consultants and ensure quality control of outputs.
- Strong political economy awareness and ability to navigate sensitive reform environments.

#### **VIII. 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 Senior Communication Expert: [NAME]**»

The deadline for submission of documents is **11:00 am Kyiv time, July 16, 2026.**

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