

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

**Quality Assurance Expert**

LEARN-IC-ECEDO-16  
Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine Program  
Грант URFT № TF0D0612

## **I. Background**

The Government of Ukraine is implementing a comprehensive reform of the education sector aimed at improving teaching and learning conditions and strengthening management capacity at all levels of education, which is one of the key priorities on Ukraine's path toward EU accession. Following the adoption in 2024 of the new [Law of Ukraine "On Preschool Education,"](#) which entered into force on 1 January 2025, active transformation processes have also expanded to the preschool education sector.

Early childhood and preschool education is identified as the top strategic priority in the [Strategic Action Plan](#) of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine through 2027, approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine Order No. 276 dated 7 March 2024. The ultimate goal of the reform is to ensure access to quality preschool education for every child, including children with special educational needs, through the achievement of several strategic objectives: accessibility, highly qualified and motivated personnel, alignment of education quality and content with European standards, effective systems for quality monitoring and assessment, governance, and financing.

In the [European Commission's 2024 Enlargement Policy Report](#), Ukraine's movement in this area was recognized as some progress achieved, while emphasizing the need to ensure implementation of preschool education legislation introducing measures aligning to EU principles, focused 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 Preschool Education Development Strategy, presented during the ["First Steps Forward"](#) event, the preparation of new secondary legislation, and the allocation of additional budgetary resources.

These reforms, which are the most transformative in over three decades, will be implemented in two phases. The first phase envisages capacity development at national and local levels for reform implementation on a limited scale (approximately 35 communities), combined with rigorous process evaluation to prepare for scaling. The second phase envisages nationwide implementation of the strategy.

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

In 2024, Ukraine and the World Bank signed agreements for the LEARN Operation.

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.

In addition, USD 30 million in Investment Project Financing is provided under the Grant Agreement between Ukraine and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association acting as administrator of the Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction and Reform Trust Fund ([URTF No. TF0C5794](#)). Furthermore, on 19 December 2025, an Additional Financing Grant Agreement for the Project “Lifting Education Access and Resilience in Times of Need in Ukraine” was signed between Ukraine and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association, acting jointly as Supervising Entity for the Global Partnership for Education Fund and administrator of the Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction and Reform Trust Fund ([GPE No. TF0D0613](#), [URTF No. TF0D0612](#)), in the amount of USD 31.1 million.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine established the Early Childhood Education Development Office (ECEDO). Functioning as a technical implementation office within the Ministry, ECEDO provides operational and expert support for coordinating reform activities across multiple workstreams, including access and financing, curriculum and teacher professional development, inclusion, quality assurance, legal and regulatory framework, and intersectoral coordination. The Office will also be responsible for monitoring the implementation of reforms in early childhood and preschool education (ECPE). The establishment of ECEDO strengthens MoES’s capacity to manage donor-funded technical assistance, support participating communities, ensure coherence across reform components, and integrate project results into national systems to promote long-term sustainability and scalability.

## **II. Objectives**

The objective of the Consultant’s assignment is to provide the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MoES) with expert, analytical, and coordination support in developing and operationalizing an effective preschool education quality assurance system during the first phase of implementation of the “First Steps Forward” program, and in scaling improved quality assurance practices nationally through evidence-based decision-making informed by national information systems, including the Automated Information Complex of Educational Management (AIKOM).

### III. Scope of Work

The Consultant shall provide the following services, including but not limited to:

1. Support MoES in strengthening and operationalizing quality assurance systems during the first phase of implementation of the “First Steps Forward” program.
  - 1.1. Review existing internal and external preschool education quality assurance systems, including in light of Order of MoES No. 407 dated 04.03.2025 “On approval of Methodological recommendations on the formation of an internal system for ensuring the quality of education in preschool educational institutions” and Order of MoES No. 939 dated 27.06.2025 “On approval of the Procedure for conducting institutional audits of preschool educational institutions”, to identify priority areas for operational strengthening during the first phase of program implementation.
  - 1.2. Analyze the status of implementation of quality assurance requirements in pilot locations during the first phase of program implementation, including consideration of feasibility under wartime and resource-constrained conditions.
  - 1.3. Identify gaps between policy and practice, including issues related to capacity, incentives, and barriers to implementation at the preschool institution and territorial community levels.
  - 1.4. Support adaptation of internal quality assurance tools (self-assessment processes, criteria, indicators, reporting templates) to ensure practicality, proportionality, and improvement orientation through technical assistance to communities and preschool staff.
  - 1.5. Provide technical recommendations to ensure that quality assurance approaches promote child-centered, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate practices in line with the State Standard for Preschool Education.
  - 1.6. Work closely with implementation teams to transform quality assurance processes from parallel or compliance-driven exercises into regular program operations.
2. Support MoES in alignment and coordination with national quality assurance bodies and systems.
  - 2.1. Serve as the technical focal point for coordinating program implementation by MoES with national stakeholders in the area of quality assurance, including the State Service of Education Quality of Ukraine (SSEQ), the Institute of Educational Analytics administering AIKOM, and relevant methodological institutions.
  - 2.2. Support alignment between quality assurance approaches applied during the first phase of the “First Steps Forward” program and national requirements for internal and external quality assurance, ensuring compliance with applicable legislation and regulations.
  - 2.3. Provide recommendations for alignment of quality assurance activities supported during the first phase of program implementation with institutional audits conducted by SSEQ and institutional self-assessment processes.
  - 2.4. Document agreed coordination mechanisms and lessons learned for use in future national guidance and scale-up.
3. Support MoES in strengthening the use of data and digital systems, including AIKOM, for quality assurance.
  - 3.1. Assess how existing data collected through AIKOM and related systems can be used to support quality assurance at institutional, community, and national levels beyond administrative reporting.
  - 3.2. Support integration of quality-relevant indicators (structural, process, and outcome indicators) into AIKOM-based workflows where appropriate and feasible.
  - 3.3. Provide technical recommendations for aligning internal self-assessment data, AIKOM administrative data, and emerging digital platforms (e.g., “Mriya for Preschool”) to support data-driven decision-making.

- 3.4. Identify risks related to data collection burden, data quality, and digital capacity at preschool institution level, and propose mitigation measures.
- 3.5. Support development of practical guidance for implementers and institutions on using data for quality improvement rather than solely for compliance purposes.

4. Support MoES in strengthening stakeholder capacity for implementation and use of quality assurance systems.

- 4.1. Provide technical support and консультації to program staff, local self-government bodies, and preschool leaders on concepts, processes, and improvement cycles related to internal quality assurance.
- 4.2. Contribute to the development or refinement of training materials, methodological guidance, and tools related to quality assurance for use during the first phase of program implementation.
- 4.3. Provide advisory and methodological support on implementation of participatory and improvement-oriented approaches to quality assurance among institutional leaders, pedagogical councils, and teaching staff, supporting the transition from an inspection-based model to a continuous quality improvement model.
- 4.4. Provide advisory and methodological support to strengthen meaningful engagement of parents and local communities in education quality assurance processes in accordance with applicable legislation.
- 4.5. Identify capacity gaps that need to be addressed for national scale-up, including in human resources, institutional mandates, and support structures.

#### **IV. Expected Deliverables**

1. Technical Note on the Assessment of the Current Status of Preschool Education Quality Assurance System Implementation in Locations Participating in the First Phase of the “First Steps Forward” Program and Action Plan, including analysis of existing practices, identification of key gaps, and priority measures for strengthening and operationalizing the quality assurance system within the “First Steps Forward” program.
2. Adapted Quality Assurance Tools and Methodological Guidance: A package of adapted quality assurance tools and practical guidance aligned with national frameworks to support effective implementation during the first phase at preschool institution and local government levels.
3. Documented Coordination Mechanism between AIKOM and the National Preschool Education Quality Assurance System, defining stakeholder roles and responsibilities, interaction procedures, data exchange mechanisms, and use of information for monitoring and supporting preschool education quality.
4. Capacity Strengthening and Technical Support Outputs: Targeted training materials and documented technical support provided to program teams and stakeholders to strengthen understanding and application of preschool education quality assurance systems.
5. First Phase Implementation Report and Recommendations for National Scale-Up: A synthesis report capturing lessons learned from the first phase of the “First Steps Forward” program and providing practical recommendations to inform national scale-up of strengthened preschool education quality assurance systems.

#### **V. Performance Indicators for Consultant Service Delivery**

1. Timely development and submission of methodological guidance, technical notes, and quality assurance reports in accordance with the agreed work plan.
2. Preparation of practical and context-adapted quality assurance tools suitable for use by territorial communities and ECEDO teams.
3. Provision of technical support for implementation of quality assurance tools and facilitation of their piloting/use in participating communities.
4. Preparation of analytical materials and recommendations enabling use of quality assessment results for management decision-making and program adjustment.
5. Effective coordination with other ECEDO components through alignment of approaches, tools, indicators, and reporting formats.

## **VI. Reporting**

The Quality Assurance Expert is subordinated directly to the Project Coordinator/Co-Coordinator, working under the supervision of the Head of ECEDO, with a functional (dotted-line) coordination role with the Deputy Head of ECEDO for Cross-Sectoral Coordination.

The Expert works in close collaboration with Access & Financing experts, and relevant MoES directorates.

The Consultant coordinates activities with the Head of the World Bank Operations Management Unit.

The Consultant shall submit monthly reports to the Project Coordinator/Co-Coordinator, in hard copy. The reports shall include a description of services provided during the reporting period.

## **VII. Required Qualifications**

### Minimum Qualification Requirements

- At least Master degree in Education, Public Policy and Administration, Management, Statistics, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- At least 5 years of professional experience in monitoring and evaluation, quality assurance, or system-level performance assessment.
- Proven experience in designing or implementing quality assurance frameworks or monitoring tools in education.
- Proven ability to develop results frameworks for programs and projects (change theories, logframes, result matrixes), indicators, and data collection instruments aligned with national policies, reforms and international donor requirements.
- Experience of conducting or coordination of process evaluations or field monitoring in the education sector.
- Strong understanding of early childhood education quality dimensions, including pedagogy, inclusion, and learning environments.
- Experience working with education data systems (AIKOM, EMIS, or similar).
- Prior experience with World Bank, UNICEF, or other development partners.
- Fluency in Ukrainian.
- At least B2 level of proficiency in English.

### Desirable Skills and Qualifications

- Experience with classroom or service quality observation tools (e.g. ECERS, CLASS, Teach ECE).
- Advanced analytical and data visualization skills (Power BI, Tableau, R, Stata, SPSS).

- Experience designing institutional self-evaluation frameworks.
- Knowledge of inclusive education quality indicators and monitoring of special educational needs.
- Familiarity with international ECEDO and preschool quality standards (OECD, UNESCO, EU).
- Strong ability to translate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) findings into actionable policy and implementation recommendations.
- Excellent analytical writing and presentation skills.

### **VIII. Duration and Modality of Service Delivery**

The Consultant shall provide services through 31 August 2028. The contract may be extended subject to satisfactory performance and mutual agreement between the Consultant and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MoES) during the financing period of the Operation.

The Consultant shall provide services under this Contract on a continuous basis throughout its term, with a level of engagement equivalent to full-time, in the volume necessary for proper performance of the tasks set forth in the Terms of Reference.

Duty station: Kyiv, Ukraine. The Consultant is expected to provide services remotely where feasible; however, upon request of MoES, the Consultant shall be available to report to and/or provide services at MoES premises at short notice.

### **IX. 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) Cc: [serhiy.artemenko@uiherp.org](mailto:serhiy.artemenko@uiherp.org). Please indicate the email subject line as: «**LEARN: Selection of the Quality Assurance Expert: [NAME]**»

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

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