

Terms of Reference for Technical Assistance to support the development of a model of transition from Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to Inclusive Early Education (IEE) services in 2 regions of Ukraine

June 1st, 2018 to April 1st, 2019

Overview

The OSF-Early Childhood Program (OSF-ECP) requires support for the Enabling Childhoods Concept under the Equity and Social Inclusion sub – theme. The concept includes: (1) support for grantees working to develop early childhood intervention (ECI) services and systems in six countries in Central Eastern Europe/Eurasia; and (2) support for grantees in nine countries that are testing new models of inclusive early education (IEE) in order to enhance social cohesion, promote quality inclusive services and reduce the placement of children in segregated educational environments.

OSF-ECP continues to contribute to the development of quality inclusive policies and services with field-building support and activities targeting identified gaps in the field around early childhood intervention and inclusive early education. Grantees are working to further their service-delivery capacities at kindergarten and primary education level, scale and connect quality pilot models, advocate for introduction and reform of national IEE policies, strategies and procedures, network and raise global awareness on the importance of ECI and IEE.

Country policy context

In Ukraine reforms take place in the field of inclusive education and early intervention. In 2015 the President of Ukraine adopted the National Strategy in a field of Human Rights¹, which included the chapter “Providing children’s rights” with an outcome to implement early intervention services. In addition, the National Action Plan on realization of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) for the period beginning in 2016, includes piloting of the early intervention practices in health services². On March 2017, the memorandum of understanding between key stakeholders was signed³. One of the expected results mentioned in the Memorandum, was the development of the national platform to enable a dialogue on the issue of development and realization of state policy on early intervention.

Inclusive education is one component of these reforms as well as one of the main priorities of the policy reforms. Examples of positive changes related to inclusive education achieved at policy level include:

- The Statement of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine #88 as of February 14, 2018 on providing the subvention (additional funds) to the local budgets to cover the additional costs to support children with special needs.

¹Decree of the President of Ukraine #501 as of August 25, 2015

² Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine #881 as of August 26, 2015

³ UNICEF, National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities, Institute of Early Intervention, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Policy, Ministry of Education and others.

- Creating Inclusive Resource Centers (resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 12.07.2017);
- The Statement of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine #588 as of August 9, 2017 regarding the changes to the “Order of Organization of the Inclusive Education”.

While there is a political will to develop early intervention system as well as to introduce inclusive education practice, the issue of transitioning children with special needs from ECI to IEE services requires critical attention. The issue of transition was emphasized in the recommendations of the recent research⁴ conducted by Step by Step Foundation (USSF) in partnership with Enabling Education Network (EENET) on implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and in particular Articles 7, 8 and 24. The research EENET did in partnership with USSF in 2016 highlighted an additional problem – absence of transition services between early intervention and inclusive preschool education. Therefore, there is a big need in Ukraine to develop the models of transition from ECI to IEE programs together with strengthening inclusive education practices. Changes at policy level and an awareness raising campaign are needed to support the sustainability of developed models.

Brief summary of the transition project in Ukraine:

The purpose of this 19-month (October 2017 – April 2019) project in Ukraine will be to develop and pilot the model(s) of transition from ECI to IEE services for children with special educational needs (SEN) and their families in Kharkiv and Lviv regions of Ukraine. In addition, necessary recommendations regarding the changes at the local, regional and national levels will be developed to support further scale up of the developed model(s). The project will also enhance the capacities of project partners to be stronger advocates for early childhood intervention and inclusive education, especially within the context of current reforms in Ukraine.

The main implementing partner organisations include:

- Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation (USSF), Kyiv – leading organization;
- Charity Fund Early Intervention Institute (EII), Kharkiv;
- Rehabilitation Centre “Djerelo” (RC “Djerelo”), Lviv;

The partnership between these organizations is reflected in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the partner organisations.

To achieve bigger impact and further sustainability, the project will also frequently consult with the following organizations:

- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Policy, representatives of the local authorities;
- Regional local authorities (education, health, social policy);
- Regional Inclusive Resource Centres (IRCs).

Key project goals include:

1. To introduce the issue of transition between ECI and IEE services as prerequisite of successful inclusion for all children, especially children with at risk factors.
2. To develop professional competences of the ECI specialists and pre-school teachers as well as other pre-school team members of the project sites on transition.

⁴ http://www.ussf.kiev.ua/data/Ukraine%20research%20report_eng.pdf

3. To enhance inter-agency cooperation at the national (ministries) and regional (local authorities) levels to provide successful practices (ECI, transition, IEE) for all children.
4. To increase public awareness on the issues of transition.

Project activities will be mainly aimed at 1) pre-school educators – representatives of 10 project sites, including pre-school teachers, school psychologists, teacher-methodologists, representatives of local IRCs and local education authorities, 2) ECI specialists of Rehabilitation Center Dzherelo in Lviv and Charity Fund Early Intervention Institute in Kharkiv.

TOR Goals and Objectives

Participation of the international consultant is needed at this stage due the limited experience of project partners on developing a transition model from early intervention services to IEE. An individual consultant is expected to provide technical support to Ukrainian partners and work closely with all project partners in Kharkiv and Lviv, including Inclusive Resource Centres (IRCs) and local education authorities. This consultancy is primarily focused on the provision of capacity building support to enable the three national partners in Ukraine and their counterparts to pilot and establish a transition model(s) in two regions in Ukraine with a potential replication nationwide.

The consultant will provide support to the three national partners through on-line consultations, sharing resources and co-facilitation of a training for building capacity of Ukrainian partners in the area of transition from early intervention to IEE. The consultant is expected to visit Ukraine two times for the introductory workshop and the basic training.

The objectives of the consultancy are defined around the transition project, where technical expertise is needed to:

1. Provide comments on the specific action plan for transition project in Ukraine developed by Ukrainian partners;
2. Design basic training for ECI providers, professionals working in IEE field from the project sites and co-facilitate basic training with the national partners;
3. Comment on recommendations and guidelines in relation to transition issues for local authorities developed by local partners based on analysis of the regional plans to implement the national and international legislation in this field such as UN CRC, UN CRPD, decrees of the President of Ukraine, etc.;
4. Comment on the agenda prepared by the national partners for the final conference at the national level and advise the national partners on future directions of disseminating the best transition practices;
5. Provide on-line consultations to the national partners;

Deliverables/ timeline:

The consultancy shall run from June 1st, 2018 to April 1st, 2019. The number of actual working days during the consulting term should not exceed 14 days, with the deliverables and the estimated share of days as following:

- Facilitate half-day on-line consultation with Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation (USSF), Charity Fund Early Intervention Institute (EII) and Rehabilitation Centre “Djerelo” (RC “Djerelo”) **June 10, 2018- 0,5 days**;
- Comment on a specific plan of actions developed by all national project partners by **June 20, 2018- 1 day** on-line;
- Design introductory 2 day workshop (including preparation of materials and handouts for the workshop, agenda) in close collaboration with representatives of the three partner organisations, ministry of education, ministry of health, ministry of social policy to develop a programme of transition by July 1, 2018- **4 days** in Ukraine; The workshop will be for representatives of ECI services, pre-schools, inclusive resource centres, local educational authorities. The focus of the workshop should be around 1) the definition of transition and essential elements of it in Ukraine; 2) the role of stakeholders in transition; 3) the next steps of the process identified by each stakeholder. The workshop will be co-facilitated by the three national partners and the consultant.
- Face-to-face half a day consultation after the workshop to advise the national partners in developing transition plan by **July 20, 2018- 0,5 day** in Ukraine;
- Submit a report with recommendations after the workshop and ways forward to ECP and national partners by **July 30, 2018- 1 day** on-line;
- Develop basic 3-day training (including detailed syllabus and materials) on transition for ECI specialists and professionals working in preschool settings designed in close collaboration with the national partners in Ukraine (the training should include the best international practices that are applicable in Ukraine) by **August 5, 2018 - 3 days** on-line;
- Co-facilitate basic training jointly with project partners by **September 1, 2018- 3 days** in Ukraine;
- Provide inputs and recommendations for the final report on a transition model written by the national partners (based on focus groups and analysis of transition provided by the national partners) by **April 1, 2019 - 1 day** on-line.

The workshop and the training will be organized by the three partners in Ukraine. Photocopying services, translation and other similar services will be provided by the three partners in Ukraine.

Skills and experience required:

The consultant is expected to meet the following criteria:

- Considerable experience in developing transition models (from ECI to inclusive early education) with a focus on children with special education needs and children at risk
- Advanced experience in designing and conducting trainings;
- Technical expertise in the ECD, ECI, inclusive education;
- Excellent report writing skills;
- Excellent communication, facilitation and presentation skills;
- Ability to keep with strict deadlines;
- Knowledge of the region/country and experience in supporting inclusive early education reforms;

Management

The consultancy will be managed by the ECP Programme Officer. The management of the consultancy will include liaison between the country partners and the consultant, as well as quality assurance and approval of the deliverables.

All project documents, including the project description and a contact list of all relevant project partners and stakeholders will be provided to the consultant once a contractual agreement has been made.

Please note that the applications must be submitted by email to nurbek.teleshaliyev@opensocietyfoundations.org by May 21, 2018. The application should include a cover letter and resume.