# Terms of Reference

**Macedonia Conditional Cash Transfer Project (CCTP)**

**Community needs assessment for childcare and early childhood education services in Macedonia**

1. **BACKGROUND**

The Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) project’s development objectives are to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the Republic of Macedonia’s social safety net through the introduction of conditional cash transfers and improvements in the administration, oversight, monitoring, and evaluation of social assistance transfers.

By supporting strengthening of the effectiveness and efficiency of the social safety net and enhancing human capital links to cash assistance, the project contributes to the GoM’s ultimate objectives of alleviating poverty and enhancing human capital, thereby reducing the inter-generational transmission of poverty over the long run.

Over the last years there is growing consensus on the importance of early childhood development. In order to ensure full mental, physical and socio-emotional development every child needs to grow in environment which ensures socialization, education, health care, adequate nutrition, nurturing and stimulation.

In the Republic of Macedonia around 27% young children (0-6 years) are enrolled in preschool education, and although significantly increased over the last years, still it is a way below the EU participation rate. Due to the limited services available and the limited awareness among parents about the importance of the early learning, this rate is particularly high in the rural areas.

Increasing the capacities for care and education of children of pre-school age in institutions for children (public and private institutions) is one of the main strategic goals of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the Ministry of labor and social policy (MLSP).

In Macedonian the childcare and early childhood education system is organized mainly through kindergartens and early childhood development centers (there are 103 public and private kindergartens and early childhood development centers operating in 307 premises in all municipalities).

The enlargement of the country capacities for pre-school services will be supported by the MLSP through investing in repurposing (or upgrading) of existing infrastructure for preschool programs and building of new kindergartens/ early childhood development centers.

1. **MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE ASINGMENT**

The purpose of this assignment is to identify the municipality’s needs for preschool services, asses the current country capacities for providing the needed services and develop a plan per municipality for accomplishing the identified needs.

1. **SEPCIFIC TASKS**

The scope of the consultancy is to:

1. Make assessment of the needs for preschool services per municipality and/or per urban/rural districts in the Municipalities in particular for children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds (i.e., poor children, children with disabilities, etc)
2. Make assessment of the current country capacities for providing preschool services, and the capacities for enrolment in the first year school grade of children aged 5.5 years and more
3. Prepare a proposal for increasing the country capacities per municipality and/or per urban/rural districts in the Municipalities, in order to meet the identified needs for pre-school services (for the current period and for the next period of 5-10 years) by adaptation of existing premises or building new premises.

In order to complete these tasks the consultant shall:

* Conducting a desk review of existing situation regarding the preschool services in Macedonia along with statistics, available reports, and data from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the State Statistical Office, the Office for Certificates, the Municipalities and other in order to identify:
  + Projected capacity of the established institutions for preschool services, including data on specific location on each institution
  + Number of children enrolled in the preschool education aged 0-3 and 3-6 (from the Municipalities also to obtain data for number of children enrolled from different neighbors, children enrolled from other municipalities)
  + Comparison of children aged 0-6 years and the number of enrolled children in the preschool education per age group and municipality
* Conducting a field research in each municipality in Macedonia (80 municipalities), by making interviews with the Municipality officials, service providers, and with families (parents) living in the respective municipality. For the purpose of conducting interviews the consultant shall develop questionnaires and representative sample of min 0.4% of the households living in all municipalities (app. 600.000), preferably families with children (app 2.400 household) in order to identify:
  + what are the obstacles that the parents are facing in respect to enrolment of their children in preschool education,
  + What are the actual needs of the families leaving in each municipality, regarding the preschool education of their children, especially the needs of the children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds (i.e., poor children, children with disabilities and other social risks, etc), whether there is need for additional preschool services and the type of the services (whether there is a need for full time care and education or only part time, kindergartens or centers for early childhood development, etc, also for the small children that are enrolled in school whether there is a need for their after school care after finishing the classic school program, or a need for their care during the winter and the summer holiday )
  + additional capacities needed. The consultant together with the municipality officials will identify existing premises that can be upgraded/repurposed for conduction preschool services or available land for building new premises. The consultant shall gather all legal documentation needed for such interventions (property list and etc)
  + Identification of school staff that can be re/trained and transferred to work in the preschool centers/kindergartens

It is the consultant’s responsibility to organize (engage and train enumerators, prepare, translate and copy questionnaires, organize questionnaire controls in order to ensure the quality of the information being collected during the survey’s implementation, create a computerized data entry with relevant quality control tools to ensure the quality of data entry etc) and to provide logistical support (transport, per-diem, etc.) to enumerators and supervisors while data are being collected

1. **REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

The Consultants must prepare and deliver the following report:

1. Detailed plan

The consultant shall submit a report of the preparatory activities undertaken for each phase separately (desk review and the field research):

* + Work plan and methodology for realization of the activities
  + Number of experienced enumerators contracted and trained for the purpose of the field research. The number of the enumerators and supervisors should be projected bearing in mind the fact that around 2400 households all over the territory of Macedonia should be interviewed within a 3 month period
  + Questionnaires that are going to be used during the field research translated on Macedonian and Albanian language

1. Assessment of needs for preschool services per municipality
2. Assessment of the current country capacities for providing preschool services disaggregated by municipalities and/or disaggregated by urban/rural districts in the Municipalities
3. Proposal for increasing the country capacities per municipality in order to meet the identified needs for pre-school services (for the current period and for the next period of 5-10 years) by adaptation of existing premises or building new premises.

All reports in English and Macedonian must be sent for approval to the CCT Project Director.

## **QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**The consultant firm shall posses the following relevant qualification**

* The consultant should have performed at least one assignment in the past five years, similar to the one described in this request for expression of interest (name of the assignment, description, duration, contract amount, reference),
* Solid experience in conducting sociological research,
* Experience in working with Government/relevant ministries and rural and urban communities,
* The Consultant should have large network of experienced enumerators, supervisors and data entry clerks sufficient to enable field data collection in Macedonia of app 2400 households in a period of three months,
* Strong capacity and experience in planning and organizing survey logistics.

**Key Experts:**

**Project Manager**

* At least university degree in Social Sciences (social policy, political science, economy and similar);
* At least 3 years experience as a project manager;
* Minimum 5 years of experience in the area of child protection;
* Experience on projects conducting analysis of the preschool services in Macedonia shall be considered as an advantage;
* Excellent oral and writing skills in English and Macedonian.

**Architecture or Civil Engineering**

* **University degree in Architecture or Civil Engineering;**
* **At least 5 years of professional experience in project design, assessment, inspection or supervision of construction works and large scale renovations;**
* Prior experience on projects in the public administration, social sector would be considered an advantage.
* Excellent oral and writing skills in English and Macedonian.

**Preschool services expert:**

* At least university degree in Education, Early childcare development, Human Development, Social Policy or other relevant discipline.
* Working experience in early childhood development and/or early childhood education level.
* Excellent oral and writing skills in English and Macedonian

1. **DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The expected start date of the assignment is December 2017 , and the expected duration of the assignment is until March 31, 2018.