

Terms of Reference (ToR)
For
institutional service provider who will be responsible for
Programme Evaluation

Leave No Child Out (LNCO) – Building Inclusive, Equitable and Quality
Education in Georgia Programme

Country:	Georgia
Region:	Europe and Central Asia Region (ECAR)
Object of evaluation:	Leave No Child Out (LNCO) - Building Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Education in Georgia Programme
Time period of evaluation:	19 June 2023 – 15 October 2023
Geographic coverage:	Georgia
Type of evaluation:	Programme Evaluation
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the Terms of Reference for a programme evaluation of the tripartite partnership programme Leave No Child Out - Building Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Education in Georgia, supported by the Government of Norway and implemented during the period of 1 October 2020 through 31 September 2023. UNICEF is looking for the institutional service provider who will be responsible to perform all tasks specified in this Terms of Reference. The evaluation will be conducted through an institutional contract with the selected company on a national level. The proposed evaluation team will consist of at least two evaluation experts: senior-level consultant (Team Leader) and a consultant (Team Member/Technical Expert). Additional researchers can be considered by the bidders to conduct the data collection.

In 2020, a three-year Partnership Programme in the field of education was initiated by the Government of Norway, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and UNICEF. The partnership supports the Government of Georgia's efforts in promoting, fostering, and monitoring quality and inclusiveness of education. This trilateral cooperation is based on the longstanding collaboration between the parties focusing on the enhancement of human and institutional capacities in the education field, improvement of learning environments and accessibility of children and teachers to diverse opportunities for improved motivation, performance, teaching and learning.

The Partnership Programme identified three major outcomes to pursue:

1. A robust overarching and inclusive education support system is progressively in place and functioning, to meet national demands and international standards on inclusive education for children with disabilities (CWD) including from ethnic minorities.
2. Effective teacher education programmes (pre- and in- service) and supportive (teaching and learning resources) systems that meet international standards and practices are functioning to ensure that teaching workforce and management adhere to/abide by inclusive and quality education.
3. Stigma and harmful social norms against children with special educational needs and disabilities reduced to improve access and participation of children into formal and non-formal educational services.

CONTEXT

General education in Georgia is organized into Primary (Grades 1-6), Basic (Grades 7-9), and Upper Secondary (Grades 10-12) education. Under national legislation, Law of Georgia on General Education only Grades 1 to 9 are compulsory (<https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/29248/56/en/pdf>). There are 2,321 state-authorized schools in Georgia, including 2,085 public and 236 private schools. Approximately 565,000 students are enrolled in schools. There are seven resource schools (formerly called special schools) out of which four is for children with multiple disabilities, two for children with hearing impairment and one – for children with vision impairment.

The National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights in Georgia (2022-2030) aims to 'Establish a high-quality education system accessible to all children, including those with special needs'

<https://info.parliament.ge/file/1/BillReviewContent/304603>). According to the data of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia for the 2020-2021 academic year, around 10,000 children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities (CWD) were mainstreamed into public schools in comparison to 500 children who were enrolled in schools in 2012. While the system opened the door for CWD, the capacity and quality of education was still very low. The Georgian education system provided different structures and elements for CWD, but they were disconnected. Moreover, social norms were not supportive of inclusive education. According to the Welfare Monitoring Survey of 2017, more than 28 per cent of people in Georgia stigmatized persons with disabilities (<https://www.unicef.org/georgia/media/1226/file/WMS%20ENG%202017.pdf>).

Georgia's participation in PISA 2018 showed that Georgia's scores are among the lowest among PISA-participating countries and economies. Large inequalities in learning outcomes persist, with a high percentage of students (more than two-thirds) performing below the proficiency level. In terms of gender equity, girls outperformed boys in reading and science and had similar scores in mathematics (https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/PISA2018_CN_GEO.pdf).

According to the 2019 UNICEF and OECD Georgia Report on General Education, the low quality of preschool, primary and secondary education is the main barrier to improving academic achievements (<https://www.unicef.org/georgia/press-releases/oecd-report-learning-outcomes-students-georgia-are-improving-however-equity-remains>).

Almost 30 per cent of primary school teachers, and around 30 per cent of secondary school teachers in Georgia had no initial teacher preparation. Based on studies, there has been very little improvement in the qualifications of teachers in Georgia. It is noteworthy that as of 2019, 17,390 teachers, which accounts for 29% of the total teaching workforce, had not attended any professional development courses in the previous three years. This includes courses in subject-specific areas, pedagogy, and general professional skills" as reported by the State Audit Service (cited in Kadagidze, 2021. Evaluation of Learning Losses Caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic." EFA, Education Coalition). Textbooks are age inappropriate with poor content and mostly irrelevant text and activities.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Georgia is a signatory, all children should have equal access to quality education (<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>). However, children with special educational needs in Georgia are constrained in their full inclusion into the education process due to a) absence or limited availability of relevant educational resources for teaching and learning (e.g. school textbooks, teacher guidelines, etc.), b) limited capacities of teachers on modern methodologies of teaching special education needs children due to lack of in-service training programmes and underdeveloped programmes on inclusive education for pre-service training of prospective teachers in state universities, and c) communication barriers which complicate assessment of children by the MoES multidisciplinary teams which would inform student's individual learning requirements. This was further complicated by COVID-19 related school closures and movement to online and/or distance learning modalities.

BACKGROUND

To address these challenges, a three-year partnership programme, Leave No Child Out - Building Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Education in Georgia, was initiated in 2020 by the Government of

Norway, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and UNICEF. The total budget of the programme was 3,000,000.00 USD.

The objective of the Programme was to align preschool and general education with inclusive and quality education standards, improve the quality and inclusiveness of the educational environment and practices to comply with national curricula, and support all children, especially the most disadvantaged groups including children with special educational needs and disabilities, to be able to access services and develop diverse skills according to their interests, needs and abilities.

Guided by the overall objective, the programme aimed at:

- strengthening an overarching safe, inclusive, and quality learning environment including the establishment of resource schools with supporting structures offering enabling teaching and learning environment to children with disabilities.
- introducing after school programmes supporting the most vulnerable children in learning and recreation for their academic, emotional, and physical development.
- building a stronger teaching work force in Georgia.
- reducing stigma and harmful social norms against children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The programme is in line with the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; UNESCO's Salamanca Declaration of 1994 on "Inclusive Education," and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950.

This project aligns and contributes to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

SDG 4: Ensure quality and inclusive education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

SDG 10: Reduced inequalities within and among countries

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

The related UNICEF Goal Areas are:

Goal Area 2: Every child, including adolescents, learns and acquires skills for the future

Goal Area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

The related country programme results:

Outcome 2: By 2025, children, especially those who are vulnerable, at risk and/or with disabilities, participate in educational programmes that meet national quality and inclusiveness standards.

Outcome 3: By 2025, children and adolescents, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to inclusive social protection, policies and programmes that focus specifically on enhanced realization of the rights of all children and which are monitored through a robust child rights mechanism

Key Stakeholders: Guided by the Sustainable Development Goal 4 for education and the scope of the Partnership, UNICEF also engaged other partners in improving the quality and inclusiveness of education including the Norwegian National Service for Special Needs Education (STATPED), the Parliament of Georgia, Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of Adjara, Teacher Professional Development Centre of MoES, Office of Resource Officers of Educational institutions of MoES, Education for All (EFA) Coalition, International CK-12 Foundation, Georgian Institute for Debate and Education – GIDE, Gordon Academic College of Education, state universities of Georgia, NNLE Innovations for Inclusive Society, national and international consultants and field experts, schools, VET institutions, preschools and targeted municipalities. The roles and contributions of each stakeholder:

UNICEF: UNICEF Team defined the needs, managed the programme, contracted consultants and organizations to help with the implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities; provided technical guidance and quality assurance; carried out policy advocacy with various decision-makers; supported capacity building of central and local authorities; introduced demonstration models, raised awareness of stakeholders and the wider public. Conducted regular monitoring of activities to ensure that the programme is on-track; held monthly meetings at UNICEF and the MoES to review the progress made. Coordinated activities with multiple stakeholders to ensure maximum buy-in, sustainability, and relevance to the varying contexts in the country. UNICEF disseminated Information about the programme through media and the publicity materials, reports and publications acknowledging the donor contribution.

Statped: Statped partnered with UNICEF and signed an agreement. Statped, in close coordination with UNICEF and MoES, implemented project activities in compliance with the approved project plan and budget. Assisted in capacity building in the new inclusive education system; developed and delivered leadership development programme for the management of the inclusive education support system and a counsellor training programme.

MoES: Selected model schools for the introduction and piloting of educational innovations; granted accreditation to inclusive and quality education programs, and gave authorisation to professional organisations (NGOs, academia, etc.) to facilitate teacher training activities. MoES played a key role in strengthening of resource rooms, improving inclusive education practices at preschool and general education levels to provide quality education for children with SEN and CWDs, and ensuring their effective transition from general to vocational/higher education levels.

MoECS of Adjara A.R.: Implemented project ‘Supporting introduction of inclusive education in public schools of Adjara (Keda and Kobuleti)’ in partnership with UNICEF, to expand educational opportunities for children with SEN and disabilities through supporting the establishment of inclusive education centres and development of extracurricular programs.

Teacher Professional Development Centre (TPDC): Organized training of trainers for 22 professors and trained 400 educators and special educators on inclusive early childhood education (ECE); conducted training of trainers and delivered 200 pictorial communication cards to preschools hosting Ukrainian children.

Office of Resource Officers of Educational institutions: Administered project ‘Strengthening school inclusion and safety’ aimed at building capacities of psychosocial

service personnel, supporting professionals in provision of psychosocial services for the most vulnerable (multisectoral schools, schools with Ukrainian migrant children), development of professional standards and restorative school component.

Education for All (EFA) Coalition: Implemented ‘Enhancement of Teacher Continuous Professional Development (CPD) System in Georgia’ project to boost educational innovation and ensure sustainability, inclusiveness, and effectiveness of CPD services.

Education for All (EFA) Coalition and International CK-12 Foundation: Implemented “Enhancement of Digital Learning and Teacher Professional Development System in Georgia” programme consisting of two components”: 1. promoting digital teaching and learning in public schools by customizing Georgian school textbooks and building capacity of teachers and students on application of digital resources; 2. empowering schoolteachers to take part in developing strategies for improving their professional skills and competencies. CK-12 Educational Platform was introduced to the academic staff of partner state universities as well.

Georgian Institute for Debate and Education (GIDE): Supported central and local authorities in modelling an *inclusive after school programme*, debate clubs in selected municipalities for improved learning and care, especially for disadvantaged children.

Gordon Academic College of Education: Provided technical support to MoES and selected municipalities in the design of non-formal education programmes for children with SEN and disabilities, and from poor families; developed recommendations for the improvement of teachers’ pre-service programmes for preschool and general education teachers and educators and teacher in-service training programmes and approaches in compliance with international standards.

Innovations for Inclusive Society: The partner provides technical support to the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES) in increasing the quality of education of students with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities by strengthening functional application of resource rooms at schools, introducing effective transition practices from general to vocational/higher education level and establishing school-based parent clubs. The project improves the capacity of the school-based Inclusive Education Support Teams of 10 public schools and inclusive education specialists of 10 vocational education (VET) institutions on inclusive and quality education through providing a series of training and on-the-job professional supervision and guidance. Besides, the project will contribute to raising parents’ awareness on positive parenting and build a culture of parent-teacher cooperation. The project closely cooperates with MoES, Teacher Professional Development Center, Vocational Skills Agency and Office of Resource officers of Educational Institutions.

State universities: Seven state universities were capacitated to enhance their academic role in reaching schoolteachers and communities for improved capacity on inclusive and quality education. The universities have undertaken various initiatives aimed at disseminating knowledge and raising awareness about child rights among different organizations, institutions, and society. The project “Strengthening university capacity for supporting inclusive preschool and general education” aimed to diversify the centralized teacher training system by introducing a new role of universities in training, supervising and coaching existing preschool and general education teachers in their respective municipalities. The academic staff were also capacitated to improve monitoring capacity by conducting research studies about the rights of children in Georgia. The research findings and recommendations will be presented to parliamentarians and government members to inform decision- and policymaking.

National Center for Education Quality Enhancement: The project aimed to support the improvement of the early childhood and preschool education quality and inclusion and the implementation of the related Law and national standards in close cooperation with stakeholders through developing a national authorization system. The project was focusing on promoting the development of institutional self-assessment mechanisms of ECE institutions and strengthen the capacity of the system to carry out the authorization process.

Action Global Communication: The “See Every Colour” campaign aimed to build on successes in combatting existing public stigma and harmful social norms against children with special educational needs and disabilities. In partnership with Action Global Communication, UNICEF reached 300 students, 300 teachers, and 1,860 mothers, fathers and childcare professionals from local community groups and regional municipalities through a series of educational and info-sharing sessions conducted in 20 schools across 6 regions of Georgia. In addition, resources related to building inclusive education and societies was disseminated through social media (Facebook) daily. For more than three months, almost 350,000 people viewed the content on a campaign webpage and around 15,000 - 20,000 people interacted with it in different ways (long view, comment, like, share etc.). The campaign also targeted traditional media viewers and through participation in different popular TV shows, 300,000 viewers were reached. Five business entities expressed readiness to integrate inclusive education related information in their communication strategies, thus ensuring sustainability of the built cooperation.

Rights holders: Children between 3 – 18 years of age, with a specific focus on CWD, national minorities and marginalised children.

Duty bearers: Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, State Universities, Vocational Education and Training Institutions, Schools, Preschools, Teachers, Principals, targeted Municipalities, Teacher Professional Development Center (TPDC), Educational Resource Centers (ERCs), Vocational Skills Agency and Office of Resource Officers of Educational Institutions, parents, and media.

As the programme is in its final stage of implementation, UNICEF is commissions an external, independent and gender-responsive evaluation of the programme ([UN Women Evaluation Handbook: How to manage gender-responsive evaluation | UN Women – Headquarters](#)).

Findings and recommendations from this evaluation will inform the stakeholders on:

- Accomplishment of the main outcomes.
- Contribution to improving the access and quality of education and services for children with disabilities (CWD) including from ethnic minorities and the most marginalized, identified in the program description.
- Scalability and sustainability of the interventions.

Theory of change: The theory of change (ToC) should be developed retroactively based on the result framework of the project.

Results Chain:

Outcome 1- A robust overarching and inclusive education support system is progressively in place and functioning, to meet national demands and international standards on inclusive education for CWD including from ethnic minorities

Output 1.1- Overarching and inclusive education support system with legal and operational frameworks is designed

Output 1.2 - Resource schools with supporting structures offer enabling teaching and learning environment to children with disabilities

Output 1.3 - Children with disabilities, stakeholders and service providers benefit from improved and accessible coordination and monitoring systems of inclusive education

Output 1.4- Local authorities in selected municipalities have capacity to assess, plan, implement and monitor local policies and services to ensure full utilization of the benefits of inclusive pre-school and general education and its support system at the local level

Outcome 2:Effective teacher education programmes (pre- and in- service) and supportive (teaching and learning resources) systems that meet international standards and practices are functioning to ensure that teaching workforce and management adhere to/abide by inclusive and quality education

Output 2.1: University knowledge hubs have the capacity (technical and financial) to offer an innovative platform that is tool for collaboration among stockholders for sharing of improved knowledge and skills

Output 2.2: Content of Bachelor and Master level programmes is enhanced for quality education of prospective teachers in nine state universities

Output 2.3: In-service teacher training programmes on inclusive and quality education are aligned with international standards and practices to enable continuous professional development opportunities for teachers

Output 2.4: Key stakeholders in line ministries and municipalities have improved capacities on (i) evidence-based policy making, (ii) effective governance, (iii) monitoring and evaluation, (iv) professional development of preschool staff and (v) delivery of inclusive services for young children in preschool institutions

Outcome 3: Stigma and harmful social norms against children with special educational needs and disabilities reduced to improve access and participation of children into formal and non-formal educational services

Output 1.3: Key stakeholders have the capacity to reduce harmful social norms against SEN and CWD

Impact: Children in Georgia, especially children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities (CWD) benefit from increased access to inclusive and quality education

Detailed results framework with baseline data and targets is enclosed. See Annex 1.

PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The **purpose** of this evaluation is to measure changes as a result of the programme and provide evidence between the interventions and the outcomes. In addition, the purpose is to define what

has worked and what has not in the Programme and what would be the best way forward. The baseline will serve as a point of comparison with the findings from the final evaluation.

Timeframe to be covered by the evaluation is from the start of the programme on 1 October 2020 through 30 June 2023. The evaluation should be both summative and formative.

The evaluation **objectives** of the Leave No Child Out Programme are as follows:

- Provide an assessment to what extent the programme approaches, and interventions were effective in meeting the needs of the children with SEN and CWD including from ethnic minorities (achieving the outcomes) and girls. This includes identifying what has not been achieved through initiated activities.
- Assess the impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the programme from its inception to its almost completion, with focus on its ability to respond to the needs of the rights holders: children between 3 – 18 years of age, with a specific focus on CWD ethnic minorities and girls, national minorities and marginalised children.
- Assess how well the main transformative results were accomplished during the programme implementation in terms of: (i) coordination and collaboration to meet national demands and international standards on inclusive education for children with disabilities (CWD) including from ethnic minorities; (ii) quality and delivery of the proposed activities within the programme; (iii) consultation and participation with the stakeholders to promote the participatory approaches; (iv) the internal M&E systems.
- Examine to what extent the activities influenced the improvement of the situation of children with SEN including ethnic minorities and girls identified in the programme document.
- Document and provide recommendations regarding the lessons learned, best practices and innovations that can be applied to other programs.

Scope of the evaluation: The evaluation will mainly focus on the impact of the programme on the quality and inclusiveness of education, access to services for the most vulnerable and reduction of stigma and harmful social norms. The evaluation will also determine the extent to which intervention has incorporated gender, human rights-based and equity-focused approaches.

Geographic coverage: Georgia

Thematic coverage: The evaluation will cover the inclusive education reform initiatives aimed at improved quality and inclusiveness of the educational environment and practices to comply with national curriculum, while trying to increase access for children, especially the most disadvantaged groups including children with SEN and CWD, and diversify skills according to their interests, needs and abilities. The programme consists of number of projects that were aimed at achieving the intended outcomes. Because of the time and resource limitations, it is impossible to evaluate all of them thoroughly. Therefore, the evaluation focus will be on the larger scale projects:

- “Inclusive Education Support System”. Implementing partner: Norwegian Government Agency for Special Needs Education (Statped).
- “Supporting the Government of Georgia in improving Inclusive Education Services for Children”. Implementing partner: Israeli based Gorgon College.

- “Strengthening university capacity for supporting inclusive preschool and general education”. Implementing partners: seven state universities and the National Center for Teacher Professional Development.
- “Strengthening resource rooms and improving inclusive education practices at schools”. Implementing partner: Local NGO “Innovations for Inclusive Society” in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.
- “Strengthening Municipal Capacity in Implementation of the Law on Early and Preschool Education and Care and National Standards”. Implementing partner: Ministry of Education and Science.
- The “See Every Color” campaign. Implementing partner: Action Global Communication.

Intended use and intended users: The evaluation should be both summative and formative. The evaluation results will be used by UNICEF Georgia and the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia for defining the future course of action in advancing inclusive, equitable and quality education in Georgia. The audience of the evaluation will be the Government of Norway, UNICEF Georgia, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, and key stakeholders such as the schools, pre-schools, Universities, Teacher Professional Development Center, Parliament of Georgia, municipalities, Programme implementing organizations, other donors working in this area, and interested civil society organizations (CSOs).

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Evaluation evidence will be judged using modified Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) criteria of impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, as well as equity, gender equality and human rights considerations. Key evaluation questions (and sub-questions) include (but are not limited to) the following:

Impact of the interventions on access to inclusive and quality education for all children in Georgia, especially children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities (CWD).

- How did the intervention helped children in Georgia, especially children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities (CWD) to benefit from increased access to inclusive and quality education?
- How did the programme ensure that all the intended target groups, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, benefitted equally ?
- To what extent the programme addressed gender issues?
- How did the interventions lead to the establishment of effective teacher learning programmes (pre- and in- service) and supportive (teaching and learning resources) systems that meet international/ EU standards/ practices?
- How did the intervention cause change in harmful social norms against children with special educational needs and disabilities?
- To what extent the intervention is leading to other changes, including “scalable” or “replicable” results?

Relevance of the interventions in relation to the national inclusive education priorities and policy and the needs of children with SEN and CWD in Georgia:

- How relevant was the programme to the needs and priorities of the target groups? Are there new needs that need to be addressed?
- Have contextual factors (COVID-19 outbreak) been considered in the design and implementation and adaptation of the programme?
- To what extent the programme contributed to achievement of national development priorities?

Effectiveness of the programme in achieving its objectives, including:

- What interventions were effective at addressing the Programme purpose in a sustainable manner?
- What have been the major factors influencing the achievement/or non-achievement of the programme outcomes?
- What interventions were less effective at addressing the programme purpose or objectives?
- To what extent has the programme contributed to accelerating the SDGs at the national level?

Efficiency of the programme outcomes and outputs - both qualitative and quantitative - in relation to the inputs provided:

- How efficiently has the programme been managed in terms of its human / financial resources and organizational / governance structure?
- To what extent were actions of various partners complimentary?
- What are the comparative strengths and added values of individual implementing organizations agencies in the frames of the programme?
- Are there more efficient ways and means of achieving outcomes?

Sustainability of the benefits of the programme implemented in Georgia:

- To what extent has the strategy adopted by the programme contributed to sustainability of results?
- To what extent has the programme supported the long-term buy-in, leadership and ownership by the Government and other relevant stakeholders?
- How likely will the results be sustained beyond the programme through the action of Government and other stakeholders?
- What are the lessons learned?
- To what extent the program contributed to promoting girls' education, improving their access to school and quality learning?

EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Participatory approach

The evaluation will be based on an inclusive, transparent and participatory approach, involving a broad range of partners and stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. An initial stakeholder map will be developed to identify stakeholders who have been involved in the preparation and implementation of the programme and those partners who do not work directly with UNICEF yet play a key role in a relevant outcome or thematic area in the national context. These stakeholders include government representatives, civil society organizations, implementing partners, the private sector, academia, other United Nations organizations, donors

and, most importantly, rights-holders - 3 - 18 years of children, with a specific focus on CWD, national minorities and marginalized children. They can provide information and data that the evaluators should use to assess the contribution of UNICEF support to changes in each thematic area of the programme. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring participation of women, youth and children, especially those from vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Mixed-method approach

The evaluation will primarily use qualitative methods for data collection, including document review, interviews, group discussions and observations during field visits, where appropriate. The qualitative data will be complemented with quantitative data to minimize bias and strengthen the validity of findings. Quantitative data will be compiled through desk review of documents, websites and online databases to obtain relevant financial data and data on key indicators that measure change at output and outcome levels.

Methodology

The approach and methodology of the evaluation should be guided by UNICEF's revised Evaluation Policy ([Revised evaluation policy of UNICEF 2018 | UNICEF Evaluation in UNICEF](#)) and UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation ([Detail of UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation \(unevaluation.org\)](#)), the Evaluation Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group ([UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Standards.pdf](#)), and UNICEF's reporting standards ([Ethical reporting guidelines | UNICEF](#)). Applications should set out an approach and methodology for gathering and analysing data allowing theory-based evaluation. Moreover, applicants are welcome to suggest ideas about how they would approach this assignment to complete it as efficiently and timely as possible.

The evaluation questions are formulated as per [OECD-DAC evaluation criteria](#). While five criteria will be included (impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability), additional cross-cutting issues such as relevant human rights, including child rights, equity and gender equality are also examined. The evaluators will be expected to adopt a user-driven approach to the development of an evaluation strategy that will guide the work over the next years. It is important to note that the evaluation is focused both on the accountability and learning purposes.

Data collection

The evaluation will consider primary and secondary sources of information:

Primary data will be collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants at national and sub-national levels (government officials, representatives of implementing partners, civil society organizations, other United Nations organizations, donors, and other stakeholders), as well as focus group discussions with service providers and rights-holders (notably children with SEN and CWD, including ethnic minorities) and direct observation during visits to selected sites. Surveys and questionnaires involving other stakeholders could also be considered.

Secondary data will be collected through desk review, primarily focusing on annual work plans, work plan progress reports, monitoring data and results reports, surveys, census. (Official data of the MOES and Social Service Agency, MoES Evaluation Report, MoES annual reports, MoES, Statped and UNICEF monitoring reports, School mapping report,

MoES minutes of inter-agency coordination mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation reports, bi-annual reports of state universities, municipal records).

The collected data shall include baseline, indicator, targets, output and outcome data available through progress reports. The evaluation team shall ensure that data collected is disaggregated by sex, age, location and other relevant dimensions, such as disability status, to the extent possible. The data collection tools that the evaluation team will develop, which may include protocols for semi-structured interviews and group discussions, checklists for direct observation at sites visited or a protocol for document review, shall be presented in the inception report.

To the extent possible, the evaluation should include the views of not only key stakeholders but also programme direct and indirect beneficiaries. During data collection, where possible, gender and human rights (including child rights) shall be incorporated in the evaluation design and instruments in accordance with UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations ([Detail of Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation - Towards UNEG Guidance \(uneval.org\)](#)) and the UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicators (www.unevaluation.org/document/download/3880).

Data analysis

The evaluation matrix will be the major framework for analyzing data. The evaluators must enter the qualitative and quantitative data in the evaluation matrix for each evaluation question and each assumption. The evaluation matrix must have indicators, benchmarks, assumptions and/or other processes from which the analysis can be based, and evaluative conclusions drawn. The design should show clearly how the evaluation will assess the path towards outcomes and impact. Once the evaluation matrix is completed, the evaluators should identify common themes and patterns that will help to answer the evaluation questions. The evaluators shall also identify aspects that should be further explored and for which complementary data should be collected, to fully answer all the evaluation questions and thus cover the whole scope of the evaluation adherence to a code of ethics and a human right based and gender sensitive approach in the gathering, treatment and use of data collected should be made explicit in the inception report. Perspective from both rights holders and duty bearers shall be collected.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation process can be broken down into different phases that include different stages and lead to different deliverables: inception phase; field phase; reporting and dissemination phase. The evaluation team leader must undertake quality assurance of each deliverable at each phase and step of the process, with a view to ensuring the production of a credible, useful and timely evaluation.

The Evaluation team will be responsible for conducting the evaluation. This entails among other responsibilities designing the evaluation according to this terms of reference; gathering data from different sources of information; analyzing, organizing and triangulating the information; identifying patterns and causal linkages that explain the programme performance; drafting evaluation reports at different stages (inception, draft, final); responding to comments and factual corrections from stakeholders and incorporating them, as appropriate, in subsequent versions; and making briefs and presentations ensuring the evaluation findings, conclusions and

recommendations are communicated in a coherent, clear and understandable manner once the report is completed.

The evaluation process is expected to contain three phases: inception (1), data collection and field visit (2); and analysis and reporting (3).

Inception Phase

In the inception phase, the activities will be carried out by the evaluation team, in close consultation with UNICEF. The inception phase should include but not be limited to the following:

- Evaluation kick-off meeting between the relevant UNICEF staff and evaluation specialists;
- Desk review of background information and documentation on the programme context, as well as other relevant documentation;
- Conduct the evaluability assessment, examine the available data sources and possible extent of data disaggregation;
- Formulation of a final set of evaluation questions based on the preliminary evaluation questions provided in the ToR;
- Development of the evaluation matrix including indicators, benchmarks, assumptions and/or other processes from which the analysis can be based, and evaluative conclusions drawn;
- Development of a final stakeholder map and a sampling strategy to select sites to be visited and stakeholders to be consulted through interviews and group discussions;
- Development of a data collection and analysis strategy, as well as a concrete and feasible evaluation work plan and agenda for the field phase;
- Development of data collection methods and tools, assessment of limitations to data collection and development of mitigation measures.

At the end of the inception phase, the evaluation team will develop an inception report that presents a robust, practical and feasible evaluation approach, detailed methodology and work plan. The Inception Report should include evaluability assessment and examination of the extent of data disaggregation in M&E data, collection and reporting tools and systems, as well as evaluation approach, tools, and protocols. The evaluation team will develop the inception report in consultation with the UNICEF and submit for review. The Inception Report will be subject to quality assurance, a review conducted by internal evaluation stakeholders and external quality assurance that requires a satisfactory rating for the field mission to proceed and be considered an acceptable product. The evaluation will proceed to implementation only on acceptance of a quality assured and approved evaluation design. The approval of the inception report will mark the completion of the Inception Phase.

Field Phase

The evaluation team will prepare the data collection schedule, arrange the fieldwork activities and collect the data and information required to answer the evaluation questions in the field phase. Towards the end of the phase, the evaluation team will conduct a preliminary analysis of the data to identify emerging findings. This should allow the evaluators sufficient time to collect valid and reliable data to cover the thematic scope of the programme.

At the end of this phase, the evaluation team will hold a debriefing meeting with UNICEF to present the emerging findings from the data collection. The meeting will serve as a mechanism for the validation of collected data and information and the exchange of views between the

evaluators and important stakeholders and will enable the evaluation team to refine the findings, formulate conclusions and develop credible and relevant recommendations.

Reporting Phase

In the reporting phase, the evaluation team will continue the analytical work (initiated during the field phase) and prepare a draft evaluation report, considering the comments and feedback provided at the debriefing meeting at the end of the field phase. The draft report will be circulated to UNICEF for review. The final evaluation report will be subject to a review undertaken by internal as well as external quality assurance that requires a satisfactory rating.

In the event that the quality of the draft report is unsatisfactory, the evaluation team will be required to revise the report and produce a second draft. Based on the comments, the evaluation team should make appropriate amendments, prepare the final evaluation report, and submit it to UNICEF. The final report should clearly account for the strength of evidence on which findings rest to support the reliability and validity of the evaluation. Conclusions and recommendations need to clearly build on the findings of the evaluation. Each conclusion shall refer to the evaluation question(s) upon which it is based, while each recommendation shall indicate the conclusion(s) from which it logically stems.

The evaluation report is considered final once it is formally approved and agreed with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG). The final report should be compliant with UNEG quality checklist of evaluation reports.

The evaluation team is responsible for developing a PowerPoint presentation of the evaluation results that summarizes the key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation in an easily understandable and user-friendly way. The evaluation results should be shared with the ERG and implementing partners. The evaluation brief (a concise note) will present the key results of the programme, thereby making them more accessible to a larger audience.

EVALUATION LIMITATIONS

The evaluation process may pose some limitations stemming from the limited timeframe of the evaluation, availability of primary and secondary data, budget constraints, as well as potential difficulties to include all vulnerable groups during the field phase (data collection). The latter might be challenged by the lack of availability of certain representatives of the disability community and other contextual factors.

Long-term effects: While the impact at the beneficiary level may be able to be measured at the end of the programme implementation, the impact at the institutional/systemic level will be evident only in the longer-term. Searching for evidence for longer-term effects of such interventions will be too soon.

Limited timeframe: Since the timing of the evaluation coincides with the summer holidays at schools (26 June 2023 to 15 September 2023) there will be limited opportunities for on-site observations. Due to the limited timeframe and budget constraints, it may not be possible to visit all those locations where interventions happened. Therefore, the data may be collected remotely.

Remote data collection: Collecting data remotely may be complicated by the connectivity and reception issues, as well as by challenges with reaching the intended key respondents by phone or email.

Selection bias: With the remote nature of the data collection, there is also the concern that the citizens that will be reached electronically may be better-off economically, which could also result in selection bias.

Impact will be measured at the beneficiary level, the impact at the institutional/systemic level will be evident only in the longer-term. Searching for evidence for longer-term effects of interventions will be too soon.

Every effort should be made by the evaluation team to identify the potential limitations and hindrances, come up with the mitigation measures, and ensure that relevant efforts are made to develop high-quality evaluation of the programme.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

The evaluation team is responsible to provide adequate guidance and take appropriate measures to ensure that team members adhere to the highest ethical standards during all stages of work. Before the commencement of field work, the team will ensure ethical review of full research protocol (that includes all data gathering tools/instruments and methods as well as information on how ethical issues will be dealt with) by an independent and impartial ethics review board as per UNEG Ethical Guidelines ([Detail of UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation \(unevaluation.org\)](http://unevaluation.org)) and UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis ([UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis | UNICEF Evaluation in UNICEF](#)). The evaluation will have to go through an ethical review board based on the "Criteria for Ethical Review Checklist". The evaluation team can make use of UNICEF regional Long-Term Agreement (LTA) holders – contractors that provide ethical review service (the list of the LTA holders will be provided upon request). The team should keep UNICEF fully informed on measures undertaken to safeguard full observance of ethical standards and provide any additional information on this matter if requested. Proposals should clearly identify any potential ethical issues and approaches, as well as quality assurance/oversight mechanisms. Persons who participate in data collection should be informed of the context and purpose of the impact assessment, as well as the privacy and confidentiality of the information they reveal, their right to refuse or halt their participation at any time. Special attention should be paid to issues specifically relating to:

- No harm.
- Informed consent.
- Privacy and confidentiality.
- Conflict of interest of the evaluation informants.
- Conflict of interest of the evaluation team members.

Protection protocols and procedure should be in place and fieldworkers should be adequately trained in case a survey participant is in distress or attention of public authorities is required (e.g., in case of domestic violence, crime, etc.). Personal data protection protocols shall be elaborated by the team and strictly adhered with by everyone involved in the programme.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK AND EVALUATION SCHEDULE

The deliverables associated with this contract must be completed and accepted by UNICEF by 15 October 2023. The team must provide both a briefing upon the commencement of work and prior to the final report submission. The evaluation should take place in:

Estimated Start Date: on or about 19 June 2023

Estimated End Date: on or about 15 October 2023

Deadlines for key deliverables:

- Draft inception report – 10 July 2023.
- Final inception report – 26 July 2023.
- Data collection and draft evaluation report – 20 September 2023.
- Final evaluation report, evaluation brief and presentation of findings – 30 September 2023.
- Project report, describing and documenting the process of the evaluation – 15 October 2023.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES

The Evaluation team will be responsible for producing the following products/deliverables:

Inception report: The inception report should translate the requirements of the ToR into a practical and feasible evaluation approach, methodology and work plan. The inception report should include evaluation design and explain the methodology for required information collection. It should include (at a minimum): (i) the evaluation approach and methodology (incl. the theory of change and sampling strategy); (ii) the final stakeholder map; (iii) the evaluation matrix (including the final evaluation questions, indicators, data sources, data collection methods and data analysis plan for each question); (iv) data collection tools and techniques (incl. interview and group discussion protocols); and (v) a detailed evaluation work plan and agenda for the field phase. The evaluation design should consider incorporation of the UN and UNICEF **commitment to a human rights-based approach** to programming, gender equality, and equity. The workplan should include the schedule and logistics as well as the roles and responsibilities of the Evaluation Team members.

Presentation of initial findings and provisional recommendations: at the end of the field work, the Evaluation team will present their draft findings and provisional recommendations through a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings, recommendations and lessons learned and conclusions.

Draft and Final Evaluation Report: A final evaluation report will encompass all key sections required in the draft report and will include additional stakeholder feedback. The final report needs to be clear, understandable to the intended audience and logically organized based on the comments received from stakeholders (maximum 50 pages). The first and revised drafts of final evaluation report (maximum 50 pages plus annexes) at minimum should contain the following:

- The Executive Summary (4-6 pages) of an evaluation report should present a concise and accurate statement of the most critical elements of the report.
- Evaluation report should adequately address all evaluation questions included in the TOR.
- Evaluation methodology should be explained in detail and sources of information properly identified.
- A theory of change.
- Limitations to the evaluation should be adequately released in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology.
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay, or opinions.
- Findings and conclusions should be specific, concise, and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- If evaluation findings assess person-level outcomes or impact, they should also be separately assessed for both males and females.
- Recommendations should be supported by a set of findings and should be specific and practical.

The annexes to the evaluation must include:

- ToR.
- List of persons interviewed, and sites visited.
- List of documents consulted.
- More details on methodology, such as data collection instruments, including details of their reliability and validity.
- Evaluators' biodata and/or justification of team composition.
- Evaluation matrix.
- Results framework.

The final evaluation report should be presented in a solid, concise and readable form and be structured around the issues in the Terms of Reference (ToR). All Reports should be prepared according to the UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Report Standards (2017) ([UNICEF-Adapted-UNEG-Evaluation-Report-Standards.pdf](#))

as per Global Evaluation Reports Oversight (GEROS) guidelines ([Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System \(GEROS\) Handbook and Summary \[2017\] | UNICEF Evaluation in UNICEF](#)). The Evaluation team is responsible for editing and quality control and the final report that should be presented in a way that directly enables publication.

The **evaluation brief** (a concise note) and **PowerPoint presentation** that will present the key results, conclusions and recommendations, thereby making them more accessible to a larger audience.

Copyright

All materials/data related to or produced because of the activities envisaged in this ToR and the subsequent contract will be the property of the UNICEF and cannot be reused, transferred to anyone, or otherwise utilized without UNICEF's prior approval.

All records from the evaluation (e.g., interview transcripts and summaries, focus group transcripts, databases, etc.) and all quantitative data (datasets and supporting documentation,

scope, and methodology used to collect and analyze the data) collected by the Evaluation Team must be provided to UNICEF and submitted to the UNICEF's Evaluation Database.

EVALUATION MANAGEMENT

UNICEF Georgia will be responsible for management issues and will liaise between the evaluation team and stakeholders to facilitate data collection as necessary.

An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will be set up to act a sounding board for the evaluation to foster transparency and participation and to review key evaluation deliverables. The ERG will not have any formal evaluation management responsibilities. It will act in an advisory capacity and provide inputs on all main evaluation deliverables that are expected to strengthen the quality and credibility of the evaluation. The ERG will consist of key partners.

ORGANIZATION'S MINIMUM REQUIRED QUALIFICATION

- Extensive institutional experience in programme assessments/evaluations
- Demonstrated expertise in programme/project evaluations
- Strong human and institutional capacity of managing projects and donor funds.
- Knowledge of Georgia's education support system
- Proven experience in effective communication and networking with the Ministry of Education and Science, international partners, schools, and other educational institutions.

EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation will be conducted through an institutional contract with an evaluation firm on a national level. The proposed evaluation team will consist of at minimum one (1) senior-level consultant (Team Leader) to conduct the evaluation that will be supported by at least one (1) additional consultant (Team Member/Technical Expert). Additional researchers can be considered by the bidders to conduct the data collection.

The Team Leader should bring the following competences:

- Having extensive evaluation experience (at least 8 years) with an excellent understanding of evaluation principles and methodologies, including evaluability, capacity in an array of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods, and UNEG Norms and Standards.
- Having extensive experience on education interventions - planning, implementing, managing or M&E.
- Holding an advanced university degree (Master or higher) in economics, social policy, international development, public policy, public administration, or similar; familiarity with human rights and disability issues.
- Bringing a strong commitment to delivering timely and high-quality results, i.e., credible evaluations that are used for improving strategic decisions.
- Having in-depth knowledge of the UN's human rights, gender equality and equity agendas.

- Having a strong team leadership and management track record, as well as excellent interpersonal and communication skills to help ensure that the evaluation is understood and used.
- Specific evaluation experience of education field is essential, as well as a strong mixed-method evaluation background;
- Previous solid experience of designing and leading Theory-Based Evaluation designs and documented professional experience in conducting rigorous independent evaluations that meet professional evaluation standards.
- The Team Leader must be committed and willing to work independently, with limited regular supervision; s/he must demonstrate adaptability and flexibility, client orientation, proven ethical practice, initiative, concern for accuracy and quality.
- S/he must have the ability to concisely and clearly express ideas and concepts in written and oral form as well as the ability to communicate with various stakeholders in English.
- Excellent Georgian and English communication and report writing skills.

The Team Leader will be responsible for undertaking the evaluation from start to finish, for managing the evaluation, for the bulk of data collection, analysis and consultations, as well as for report drafting in English and communication of the evaluation results.

One (1) national Team Member/Technical Expert:

- Holding advanced university degrees (Masters-level) in statistics, economics, international development, public policy, public administration, or similar coursework.
- Strong training and experience in education field and disability.
- Hands-on experience in collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, especially in relation to socio-economic interventions.
- Experience in conducting efficiency analysis.
- Strong expertise in equity, gender equality and human rights-based approaches to evaluation and expertise in data presentation and visualization.
- Be committed and willing to work in a complex environment and able to produce quality work under limited guidance and supervision.
- Having good communication, advocacy and people skills and the ability to communicate with various stakeholders and to express concisely and clearly ideas and concepts in written and oral form.
- Excellent Georgian and English communication and report writing skills.

The Evaluation Team is expected to be balanced with respect to gender to ensure accessibility of both male and female informants during the data collection process. Back-office support assisting the team with logistics and other administrative matters is also expected. It is vital that the same individuals that develop the methodology for the request for proposals for services will be involved in conducting the evaluation. In the review of the proposals, while adequate consideration will be given to the technical methodology, significant weighting will be given to the quality, experience (including CVs, at least 2 references and written sample(s) of previous evaluations) and relevance of individuals who will be involved in the evaluation.

All team members will be required to provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest or describing any existing conflict of interest. UNICEF may delegate staff member to work full-time with the Evaluation Team or to participate in the field data collection activities in-country.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

An organization/company interested to apply must provide:

- Project proposal addressing TOR requirements.
- Documents certifying the above qualification requirements.
- CV-s of the Team Members to be involved in the evaluation.
- At least two references.
- Sample(s) of previous work.
- Information of the organization's bank account issued by the bank (stamped).
- Filled VMIP Vendor Registration form (template is attached).
- Tentative project plan in accordance with UNICEF provided timeline.
- Tentative budget in USD—The budget shall be sent in a separate email titled: Financial Proposal or sent printed on paper in sealed envelope to UNICEF Georgia official Address (9 Eristavi street, IV floor, UN House).

EVALUATION PROCESS

Proposals will be evaluated against two elements: technical and financial. The ratio between the technical and financial criteria depends on the relative importance of one component to the other. Cumulative Analysis will be used to evaluate and award proposals. The evaluation criteria associated with this ToR is split between technical and financial as follows:

- Weigh for Technical Proposal = 70%
- Weigh for Financial Proposal = 30%
- Total Score = 100%

a. Technical Proposal:

The Technical Proposal should address all aspects and criteria outlined in this ToR.

The Technical Proposals will be evaluated against the following:

1. Overall response:
 - Completeness of response
 - Overall concord between the ToR requirements and propose
2. Company/Key personnel/individual consultant:
 - Range and depth of experience with similar projects
 - Sample(s) of previous work
 - relevance of references
 - Key personnel: relevant experience and qualifications of the proposed team for the assignment
3. Proposed methodology and approach:
 - Detailed proposal with main tasks, including sound methodology to achieve key outputs
 - Proposal presents a realistic implementation timeline

Total Technical 70 points.

Only proposals which receive a minimum of 50 points will be considered further.

b. Financial Proposal

The total amount of points allocated for the price component is 30. The maximum number of points will be allotted to the lowest price proposal that is opened and compared among those invited firms/institutions which obtain the threshold points in the evaluation of the technical component.

All other price proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price, e.g.,

$$\text{Score for price proposal X} = \frac{\text{Max. score for price proposal} * \text{Price of lowest priced proposal}}{\text{Price of Proposal X}}$$

Criteria for selection

- Extensive evaluation experience with demonstrated understanding of evaluation principles and methodologies, including evaluability, capacity in an array of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods, and UNEG Norms and Standards;
-
- Previous solid experience of designing and leading theory-based evaluation designs and documented professional experience in conducting rigorous independent evaluations that meet professional evaluation standards.
- Demonstrated experience/potential to bring a strong commitment to delivering timely and high-quality results, i.e., credible evaluations that are used for improving strategic decisions.
- Demonstrated commitment to delivering timely and high-quality results;
- Knowledge of the UN's human rights, gender equality and equity agendas;
- Strong training and experience in disability and education field will be an asset;
- Prior experience with UNICEF or other UN agencies will be an asset.

PAYMENT

The consultancy fee will be negotiated between the applying organizations/companies and UNICEF Georgia based on an initial proposal of the applicants. Payment will be carried out in several instalments as agreed between the selected organization/company and UNICEF, after satisfactory implementation of specific parts of the services and after provision of quality reports on the implemented activities.

To verify the quality, full research protocol, the draft and the final reports will go through UNICEF's external quality review mechanism which assigns ratings. The protocols and the reports must receive at least **Satisfactory** rating to be considered as duly delivered.

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if deliverables are incomplete or not submitted at all, or for failure to meet deadlines.

The payment of fees will be based on the submission of deliverables, as follows:

Upon approval of the Inception Report - 30%.

Upon submission of a draft final evaluation report of satisfactory quality - 30%.

Upon approval of the final evaluation report and the PowerPoint presentation of the evaluation results - 40%.

Prepared by:
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Date: 22 May, 2023

Submitted by:
Khatuna Ioseliani, Education Officer

Date: 22 May, 2023

Endorsed by:
Vakhtang Akhaladze, Operations Manager

Date: May, 2023

Endorsed by:
Amy Clancy, Deputy Representative

Date: May, 2023

Approved by:
Ghassan Khalil, Representative

Date: May, 2023