

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title of activity:	Conducting training for parents with vulnerable children to provide psychological and social support in ensuring learning and education throughout life
Coverage:	Kazakhstan

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has significant implications across population groups and key sectors in Kazakhstan, the full extent of which is still not clear. What is apparent, however, is that the health crisis is driving economic and social changes that are accelerating pre-existing challenges related to levels of poverty, disadvantage and vulnerability. The crisis also threatens to undermine and reverse significant progress made in recent years, which has seen Kazakhstan transition from lower middle-income to upper middle-income status in under two decades – with falls in the poverty rate over three consecutive years with an estimated rate of 8.5% in 2019. UNCT Kazakhstan conducted a socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable groups and SMEs between May and June 2020. This had the objective of identifying the segments of population most affected by the socio-economic consequences of the crisis and to understand its impacts. SEIA/COVID-19 provided detailed data on impacts, particularly those on the most vulnerable groups in society:

- Children with disabilities are among those most dependent on face-to-face services—including health, education and protection—which were suspended as part of social distancing and lockdown measures and they face extremely high levels of inequalities and challenges accessing services. This underscores the importance of enhancing a gender responsive, child sensitive social protection response to COVID 19 with a particular emphasis on those who are both vulnerable.
- The digital divide in Kazakhstan has deepened already existing inequalities in the access to quality education: 13% of schoolteachers, 42% of university teachers and 14% of teachers of VET institutions believe that some students did not have the opportunity to participate in the distance learning process. More than half of children aged 1 to 6 years lost access to education services. The availability of smartphone technology has provided the opportunity to study online, however, many learners do not have adequate access, which has further reduced access to learning. Parents of students in rural areas are 13% more likely to report on problems relating to poor internet connectivity. Parents reported an absence of computers, laptops, even TVs in their households. The transition to remote learning has significantly affected the quality of learning: a very significant 70% of the respondents believe that education became less productive as a result.

Given that further lockdown measures may well be needed and that the situation in terms of the impact of the pandemic is ongoing (in terms of health and state and private resources), integrated (preferably digital) interventions must be prioritized that urgently address the assessment, targeting and delivery of state social assistance to the most vulnerable groups in society.

In this context, a joint UNDP, UNESCO and UN Women project, the “Acceleration of a Digital Social Services Delivery Model to address the needs of the most vulnerable in Kazakhstan”, was

launched with funding support from UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund on COVID-19 recovery (MPTF). The project builds upon existing digital tools to deliver a platform capable of rapidly and efficiently collecting, integrating and processing information on the most vulnerable groups in Kazakhstan, to help analyze, target and process support for key groups. The intervention will build on the current electronic government initiative and focus on the "Family Social Card" being implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. This will deliver the integration and synchronization of disaggregated data from key government agencies on vulnerable groups (e.g. health, social, law enforcement and labour) and will result in a one-stop-shop system, that will ensure each family has a dedicated case worker who is able to respond to their needs.

The key outputs of this project are:

- a) The integration of disaggregated data from key government agencies on vulnerable groups, for example; health, social, law enforcement and labor, into a new database.
- b) The expansion of criteria used for assessing a family's or person's vulnerabilities with focus specific on enhancing data collection in line with international good practice. Currently, 19 indicators are gathered from information resources of government agencies. This includes information on employment, income, health status, disability, children, housing, exposure to violence, etc. This enables an assessment of the level of social risks and the family well-being. Information from some government agencies (e.g. education, health, justice) were only developed recently and information is incomplete.
- c) Upgrading of the existing digital "e-government" platform of the Republic of Kazakhstan by means of necessary additional integrations with ca. 9 relevant state and non-state government agencies connected with the Family Social Card, as well as the development of mobile applications for social workers (i.e. to insert the Family Social Card data into the centralized database via tablets).
- d) Enhancement of education services and support for the most vulnerable families and learners based on the identified needs generated by the Family Social Card Data.

Within this project, UNESCO will assess and analyze the current system of education support provided to vulnerable families, develop the methodology to identify the education needs and vulnerabilities of families to be integrated into the overall digital social services model. In addition, based on the mapping of the existing education and psycho-social support services to families, an outline of possible education services and ready solutions to concrete cases of the families at risk within the legislation of Kazakhstan will be developed. For this, UNESCO will work with the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan and its subordinate body JSC "Information-Analytic Center", which is in charge of the national education data, analysis and M&E.

In addition, UNESCO will build capacity of parents, especially women, who are the main caregivers and have become even more vulnerable in times of emergencies to cope with individual, family and interpersonal hardships, to provide support for families with vulnerable children. This support will focus on building resilience to future crises and addressing personal, mental and other social difficulties in order to ensure continuous learning and growth for children. UNESCO is looking for organizations that have expertise and experience in the following:

- i) developing and providing workshops for parents on how to organize learning at home for children with special needs,
- ii) strengthening psychological and social support for families and children,

- iii) understand the daily needs of children,
- iv) coping with sustained socio-emotional stress,
- v) understanding rights and entitlements and how to advocate for them.

In addition to the abovementioned training topics, special emphasis is to be placed on developing UNESCO's advocacy through the engagement of a suitable specialist.

a) Assignment:

Under the overall authority of the Director of UNESCO Almaty and the direct supervision of Education Programme Specialist and in close coordination with Education National Professional Officer, within the framework of MPTF_00209: the UN COVID-19 MPTF project on Acceleration of a Digital Social Services Delivery Model to address the needs of the most vulnerable in Kazakhstan, the Contractor shall:

- Liaise with UNESCO Almaty office project team regularly to ensure effective and smooth implementation of the assignment;
- Conduct a short needs-assessment of parents who have children with special needs to understand their challenges and needs in ensuring learning and education for their children, coping with daily difficulties and mental health, knowledge of the rights and advocacy needs;
- Develop or adjust the existing training programme for parents (if there is one) to address the psychological and social support needs (based on the needs-assessment);
- Organize an online training for parents by ensuring equal participation from each region of Kazakhstan, including from rural and remote areas;
- Involve and contract an international consultant with expertise on advocacy, recommended by UNESCO Almaty, including organizing his travel to Almaty for face-to-face training and online trainings in Zoom platform;
- Organize a series of trainings on advocacy for active parents, the first of which shall be face-to-face, short consultation meetings and one ToT online training course to be conducted by the international consultant by ensuring simultaneous interpretation into Kazakh/Russian from English and vice versa.
- Ensure pre- and post-evaluation of trainings from participants; compile the results into the final report for the assignment;
- Submit a final report, which shall include the results of the training sessions, background of participants, feedback from participants, reflections and lessons learnt, and suggestions for future similar activities.

b) Deliverables:

- i. **By April 30, 2022** – Submission of the draft needs-assessment and training programme on psychological and social support for parents;
- ii. **By May 31, 2022** – Conduct an online training for parents based on the training programme approved by UNESCO Almaty.

- iii. **By June 15, 2022** – Organize the first face-to-face training on advocacy for parents in Almaty.
- iv. **By June 30, 2022** – Organize follow up trainings on advocacy for parents online and submission of the final report on the results of the activities.

c) Payments (this schedule is tentative and to be discussed upon signature of the contract):

1. The first payment (up to 33% of the total budget amount) shall be made upon signature of the contract and receipt of the budget and workplan by 22 April 2022;
2. The second payment (33,5% of the total budget amount) shall be made upon submission and acceptance of the draft needs-assessment and training programme by 31 May 2022;
3. The final payment (33,5% of the total budget amount) shall be made upon submission and acceptance of the final report by 30 June 2022.

d) Eligibility/qualification/experience requirements:

1. Company/institution

The following criteria are mandatory for the entity submitting the proposal:

- a. Legal Entity registered in Kazakhstan
- b. Proven institutional expertise with minimum 2 similar trainings conducted in the past and minimum 2 years of experience linked to providing trainings on psychological and social support for parents of children with special needs in Kazakhstan (the list of trainings shall be included in the proposal)
- c. Institutional experience reflected in previous work relevant to the current assignment within the past 2 years
- d. Ability to deliver trainings for parents in the Kazakh and Russian languages (sample of training programmes in the Kazakh and Russian languages to be included in the proposal)

The following expertise is desirable for the entity submitting the proposal:

- e. Previous experience working with any of the UN agencies and/or international organizations, NGOs with specification of projects/services provided and with minimum of 1 reference (project name, contact person and contacts to be indicated in the proposal);

2. Personnel

Prospective contractors shall propose the composition of a team that will ensure adequate personnel and competencies to carry out and control the quality of the trainings that to be conducted. This will include a designated team leader.

- a) Team leader shall have a minimum of 5 years of experience in providing support to parents with children with special needs as well as have an experience and expertise in the area of inclusive education with indication of the projects and working groups engaged in Kazakhstan in the CV;
- b) At least 3 trainers in the team to provide trainings on psychological and social, education and legal support respectively for parents with indication of relevant education and experience in their CVs;

It is further agreed that:

- i. The contractor's bank charges shall be charged to the contracted amount;
- ii. All payments related to this contract will be based on the UN Exchange Currency Rate;
- iii. All expenses exceeded the amount of the contract are the responsibility of the Contractor.

Finally, it is agreed:

UNESCO shall be credited in all possible publicity related to this contract through publications, website and other information supports.

In line with UNESCO's overall gender mainstreaming strategy, UNESCO will integrate a gender perspective and apply gender analysis and mainstreaming concepts whenever feasible.

Ensure, upon written consultation with UNESCO, that the logo of UNESCO is displayed in accordance with the Guidelines on the use of the UNESCO logo.