

**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**
**Assignment Title: External Evaluation of Save the Children's Education Program in Albania**

Save the Children is pleased to invite applicants from qualified international and national consultants to assess the impact of Save the Children's Education Program. Details are shared below.

**I. Background:**

Internationally, education has been recognized as a critical factor for poverty reduction and development. Children in Albania face a variety of challenges with regards to their right to education, due to socio-economic inequalities, existing disparities and social norms around education. Disadvantaged groups, such as Roma, children with disabilities and children in the rural north have lower access and the quality of education remains variable. Reforms in the education system have resulted in higher levels of primary school enrolment and literacy. Inconsistency in data and the absence of updated disaggregated demographic statistics, especially among vulnerable and excluded groups of children, remain a concern. Building capacity of teachers, achieving zero drop-out and strengthening school-community partnerships are areas of importance for Albania.

Save the Children envisions an Albania in which all children enjoy their right to access participatory, meaningful, learning opportunities, in order to realize their fullest potential and to enhance social inclusion. Our work in education has proactively evolved since 2006 to ensure quality inclusive education for children by providing access to marginalized groups (Roma and children with disabilities) and ensuring quality education for children in both kindergartens and schools. Save the Children works with other education actors in supporting local communities to advocate their concerns with an informed collective voice for influencing policies. During the current Country Strategy Period (2010-2013) of Save the Children the profile of the education program centers on children's ability to know their rights, to be active participants in their own learning as well as championing the values of non-discrimination, inclusion and community participation.

**Program Implementation**

Area	Target	Children and Others
Quality Education	60 schools located in 6 regions: Diber, Durres, Elbasan, Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	33,000 to date, between the ages of 6-15. 1,850 teachers.
Inclusive Education/Children with Disabilities	12 schools and 12 kindergartens in 3 regions: Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	120 children (40 kindergarten children,) between the ages of 3-12. 112 kindergarten teachers, 425 basic education teachers and school psychologists; parents and other children. Regional Education Authority Specialists and representatives from health, social and protection sectors.
Early Childhood Care and Development	60 kindergartens located in 6 regions: Diber, Durres, Elbasan, Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	6,000 children between the ages of 3-6. 370 kindergarten teachers, parents and Regional Education Authorities.
<b>Total</b>		<b>39,120 children</b> <b>2,757 teachers</b> <b>parents</b>

Children in project schools, including Roma/Egyptian children and children with disabilities are able to exercise their life skills and have progressed academically both in literacy and numeracy skills. Regional Education Authorities report that teachers use participatory and combined approaches that enhance inclusiveness of a child-friendly academic environment. Save the Children has conducted regular internal sessions to review the performance of the education program and progress toward achieving its objectives and mission. Initial baseline data were established at the onset of each component of the program in a sample of school settings for each location; annual re-assessments have been conducted to compare data and solid learning has been documented and promoted in Albania and beyond. This includes

the recent evaluations of the 'Violence in Schools' and 'Children's Government' projects, all of which should be reviewed by the consultants and feed into the overall assessment of findings and recommendations for Save the Children (i.e. identify synergies and cross learning, especially when identifying potential ways forward.)

## 2. Purpose of Assignment:

Save the Children is commissioning an evaluation of the education program in Albania in order to assess the performance of the program (in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and outcome,) the perception of stakeholders and beneficiaries, to document lessons learned and to provide practical recommendations for follow-up action. The evaluation report will be used to plan for continuation of the education program during the new Country Strategy Plan period 2013-2015.

The evaluation should include the indicators of the projects and should aim to provide information on the following areas (but not limited to):

- Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact of the program and its implemented activities;
- Measure the extent to which the response has been accountable to the local needs and the level of child participation into the program;
- Examine how the program has mainstreamed cross-cutting issues such as promotion of human rights, gender equality and children's rights.
- Identify key successes and lessons learned and other lessons learned from the program.
- Provide concrete recommendations and suggestions for future program interventions.

Given the various components of the education program, the proposed evaluation will need to look at the program as a whole in order to assess how the various parts have contributed to each other and real impact for children. Interim and final evaluations of some projects under the education program have already been conducted and should contribute to the final conclusions of the proposed assignment.

It is expected that the evaluation team will conduct consultations and meetings with representatives of the following institutions/actors:

- Save the Children project teams
- Institute of Development of Education
- National Inspectorate of Pre-university education
- Regional Education Authority representatives (3 out of 6 regions)
- Partner organization (i.e. MEDPAK)
- Children and parents
- Teachers

## 3. Methodology:

An international lead consultant will be recruited to spear head the evaluation. The lead consultant will work in close collaboration with a national consultant selected for the purpose of the evaluation. It will be the responsibility of the lead consultant to work closely with the local consultant at all stages of the evaluation, including finalizing design of the process and methodology, data collection, analysis, reporting and drawing final conclusions. The lead consultant will develop the necessary tools and checklists for data collection and field interviews.

### Responsibilities of the consultants

- The international consultant holds the overall management responsibility of the evaluation, including designing and carrying out the evaluation, drafting the final report and debriefing the project team and key stakeholders.
- In conjunction with the national consultant, the international consultant will liaise with Save the Children staff throughout the process, providing regular updates and seeking their input and advice where necessary.
- The international consultant will develop an inception report, in collaboration with the national consultant, detailing the methodology-stakeholders to be interviewed, tools to be developed, time frame for the evaluation which will be shared with Save the Children.

- In conjunction with the national consultant, the international consultant will develop checklists and tools for field interviews and data collection. The tools will be reviewed by Save the Children before finalization.
- The international consultant will orient the local consultant on the data collection tools and jointly both will agree on workload and task sharing.
- In conjunction with the national consultant, present the draft evaluation results to Save the Children staff.
- In conjunction with the national consultant, share highlights of evaluation findings to stakeholders including senior representatives from Government during a forthcoming Conference in late October, 2012.
- Integrate Save the Children's feedback into the final version of the document as appropriate and present the finalized document to Save the Children.
- Both consultants will adhere to the timelines of the consultancy.
- Both consultants will ensure ethical child/parent participation.

#### **Responsibilities of Save the Children**

- Provide all required background materials to the consultant in a timely manner.
- Select National consultant to be involved in the evaluation.
- Oversee the service provider by managing the consultancy contract; monitor adherence to specified deadlines; facilitating access to required information.
- Provide guidance throughout all phases of execution, approving all deliverables, and facilitating access to any documentation (or any person) deemed relevant to the evaluation process.
- Share deliverables with stakeholders
- Perform quality control, as required of all deliverables.

**4. Duty station:** Tirana, Albania with travel to (up to) 6 regions (Diber, Durres, Elbasan, Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.)

**5. Indicative assignment dates:** September – October 31, 2012

**6. Supervisor:** Besnik Kadesha, Program Quality Specialist, with close involvement of Refik Cela, Program Implementation Manager

**7. Budget:** Interested parties should submit an outline budget in Euro with the proposal which includes total days required to complete the evaluation, daily fees, any logistical support and travel costs to be incurred and all other associated costs.

**8. Save the Children Child Safeguarding Policy:** As a condition of entering into a consultancy agreement the two evaluators must sign Save the Children International Child Safeguarding Policy and abide by the terms and conditions thereof.

#### **9. Deliverables:**

The evaluation work is expected to take place during September – October, 2012. Final submission should not be later than October 31, 2012. Actual work days should not exceed 25-30 days. The main outputs of the evaluation will be:

- Detailed action plan for the evaluation with related timeframe and deadlines (international.)
- Review of the project documents, relevant studies, statistics and official reports (international and national.)
- Evaluation design, including data collection methods and tools (international.)
- Field work and data collection (national.)
- Interviews with the targeted students, parents of the children, key stakeholders such as teachers, project staff and partner staff (national.)
- Focus group discussions will be conducted with children, parents and community representatives (national.)
- Conduct analysis (international.)
- Draft report for comments and input from the project team (international.)
- Presentation at National conference in Tirana where the consultant will present the findings of the evaluation and facilitate discussion on the recommendations for the wider community in Albania and also within Save the Children International (international/national.)
- Submit final report and recommendations in English (international.)

#### **10. Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience Required:**

The evaluation will be carried out by a team of two consultants with a team leader (international) and National (Albanian.) The team leader must have a demonstrated ability to conceptualize the overall approach to work assignments, and to plan, manage, and lead complex evaluations. He/she is able to develop appropriate evaluation

tools/methods, to ensure the accuracy, adequacy, and reliability of the evaluation findings and recommendations, to make recommendations to senior government officials, to produce analytical reports, and to recommend appropriate action.

### **Team Leader:**

The team leader should possess the following expertise and skills as a minimum:

- Extensive experience in conducting evaluations, including designing and employing both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and tools which are participatory and sensitive to the needs of children and adolescents.
- Solid experience with Results-Based Management and Evaluation Guidelines.
- At least 8 years experience of engagement with child rights preferably on issues of education (quality, inclusive or early child care and development.)
- Familiarity with the Albanian education and development context
- Working knowledge of working/workable policies and strategies on education in the region.
- Proficient in crosscutting issues
- Fluent in English.
- Relevant experience in Albania
- Previous knowledge of Save the Children and its operations desirable and
- Be available to conduct the fieldwork of the evaluation during the month of September/October, 2012.

### **National Consultant:**

The national consultant (Albanian) will have the following experience/knowledge/competence:

- A reliable and effective evaluator with extensive experience in conducting evaluations and a proven record in delivering professional results.
- MA in social studies or other related discipline
- Fluent in both English and Albanian
- A proficient practitioner of national education
- Thematic expertise in international development programs and assessing or evaluating education programs.

### **Submission of Application:**

Applicants can either apply as a team (one international and one national consultant) or individually.

All proposals/applications should be submitted as PDF or MS Word attachments in a single e-mail to [info.albania@savethechildren.org](mailto:info.albania@savethechildren.org) by **close of business Friday, August 17, 2012.**

Please ensure that the subject line states **“Proposal – Evaluation of Education Program.”** Applicants may also submit in hard copy to the following address:

#### **Save the Children, Albania Country Office**

Rruga Komuna Parisit  
Pallatet I Maji, Vila Lami  
Tirana, Albania  
P.O Box 8185

Proposals submitted by the international consultant must include the following and should not exceed 5 pages:

- Proposed approach and outline design of the evaluation.
- Work plan reflecting the key outputs/deliverables, proposed timeframes and potential for meeting the final deadline of October 31, August 2012.
- CV and References.

- Outline budget in Euro
- Where possible, candidates should submit written evidence (e.g. evaluation reports) of previous work meeting the requirements laid out in this Terms of Reference with their application.
- A statement of availability and commitment to undertake and complete the consultancy.

Selection of the consultant(s) will be based on:

- How well the proposal meets the requirements set out in the Terms of Reference.
- Relevant skills and experience.
- Value for money.

The international consultant should clearly demonstrate technical capacity to successfully complete the stated objectives *with minimal supervision* from Save the Children staff. The evaluator should clearly demonstrate the ability to present data in an objective, concise, precise, and easy to understand manner at a high professional standard of English.

**Annex A: Project Information in Brief:**

The following information aims at giving some further information on the main project components included in the education program of Save the Children:

Quality Education long term objective aimed at improving academic and non-academic performance achieved through the use of inclusive teaching and learning practices in the classroom and improved monitoring and supervisory capacities from the Regional Education Authorities.

Result 1: Children in school are self confident, give ideas and opinions, solve conflicts and are critical thinkers.

Result 2: Children in school reach higher academic results in test (20% over the baseline)

Result 3: The right to these outcomes extends to all children as a result of passage of revised education laws (normative dispositions)

Inclusive Education (children with disabilities) long term objective has been to 1) improve academic and non-academic performance of marginalize and discriminated children through promoting inclusive education.

Result 1: Increased number of CWD who enroll in school

Result 2: Increased number of CWD that attend, have social and academic progress and complete basic education

Result 3: The right to these outcomes is extended to all children as result of passage of revised education laws (normative disposition)

2) Children have a school experience which leads them to acquire tolerance and respect for differences and value multiple cultures.

Result 1: Children are receptive towards CWD and other marginalized children.

Early Childhood Care and Development long term objective aimed at improving children's (including marginalized children's) academic and non-academic skills through kindergartens, giving them a head start into basic education.

Result 1: Increased number of children enrolling in kindergartens, including marginalized groups of children (e.g. Roma, poor and rural children.)

Result 2: Children who attend kindergarten perform better in school compared to those who did not attend kindergarten.

Result 3: Kindergarten children have age-appropriate literacy and numeracy skills, they are sociable and with self confidence and have freedom to express themselves freely.

Result 4: Kindergarten children have an environment that promotes play and non-competitiveness.