**Republic of Albania**

**Ministry of Education and Sports**

**Improving Equitable Access to High Standard Public Services through GovTech**

 **Program**

Terms of Reference

**For**

 ***an Education Expert for SmartLab Activities***

1. Background

#### The World Bank is financing a program on “Improving Equitable Access to High Standard Public Services through Gov Tech” aiming to transform learning, modernize customer service and ensure accessibility for all citizens, with the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS referred to as AKSHI hereafter) as the leading implementing agency.

The program is structured in three results areas:

#### Results Area 1: Enhancing E-Service Quality and User Experience. This RA will support the government program ambitions to improve: (i) usability, efficiency, and pro-activity of the e-Albania portal; and (ii) the quality of digital services, to provide advanced, proactive solutions on secure platforms and improve Digital Service Standards.

#### Results Area 2: Improving Digital Skills and Digital Inclusion. This RA will support the Albanian Digital Transformation program’s ambitious objectives to transform learning, modernize customer service and ensure accessibility for all citizens.

#### Results Area 3: Strengthening Priority GovTech Enablers. This RA supports the GoA in its program objectives to: (i) strengthen data governance, data security and transparency; and (ii) adopting enabling digital systems, requirements, and intelligent processes. In addition, aspects of this RA are cross-cutting insofar as they support the broader achievement of results under RAs 1 and 2: for example, pro-active services require robust data governance.

#### This ToR particularly refers to Results Area 2 and therein SmartLab activities as illustrated in Annex 1. While the AKSHI is the main implementing agency responsible for the achievement of the Program results and on SmartLab activities, determine technical specifications of the ICT devices, procure, install and establish SmartLabs in 200 schools, ensure availability of internet of prescribed bandwidth, provide technology maintenance support and roll out SMIP in schools. The Ministry of Education Sports (MoES) will be responsible for implementation of SmartLab activities that include, but not limited to development and delivery of ICT curricula in grades 1-3, selection and implementation of an appropriate numeracy e-learning solution for grades 1-3, development and implementation of a teacher and school principals continuous professional development strategies, assessment of learning by students and reporting results to the AKSHI in a timely manner.(Details on SmartLab activities are in Annex 1)

The MoES wishes to recruit an Education Expert with requisite expertise as elaborated in qualifications and experience section in this ToR, to lead the capacity building activities, including continuous professional development of teachers and school principals and provide overall technical guidance on the use of education technology in delivering curricula and learning assessments pedagogy withing the framework of SmartLab activities under the GovTech Project.

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The objective of the assignment is to provide overall technical support to the SmartLab activities with specific focus on capacity building for implementation of SmartLab activities, including continuous professional development of teachers and school principals, use of SmartLab for delivery of ICT curricula and foundational skills, and monitor and evaluate education inputs and processes for achievement of SmartLab objectives.

Specific Tasks:

***Curricula and Content***

* Specific tasks would include, but not limited to, the following:
* Coordinate and facilitate roll out of grades 1-3 ICT curricula and teaching of ICT curricula using Code Monkey platform.
* Coordinate and facilitate teaching of numeracy in grades 1-3 using Code Monkey and selection of an appropriate numeracy digital platform to effectively teach numeracy skills to grade 1-3 students.
* Work with the teachers and pedagogy experts to strengthen teaching of foundational skills using SmartLab.

***Capacity building***

* In collaboration with the relevant Directorates/Departments within MoES, ASCAP and other relevant agencies, lead the preparation of a comprehensive capacity development strategy and plan for the use of educational technology within the framework of SmartLab activities. The strategy and plan would include capacity building of Officials in the MoES, Regional and Local Education Offices, ICT and primary grade teachers, school principals, and heads of teacher professional development networks.
* Coordinate implementation of the comprehensive capacity building plan and monitor the implementation, and facilitate process and impact evaluation of capacity building initiatives.
* Advise on school-parents/community interactions on SmartLab.

***Assessments***

* Coordinate with appropriate institutions for development of various learning assessment tools, both formative and summative assessments, validate the tools and facilitate implementation of those tools for grade 1-3 students in the schools with SmartLabs.
* Facilitate sharing of the assessment findings with teachers and schools to improve performance.
1. Reporting Requirements

The Consultant will report to the SmartLab Project Manager and the General Director, of Policy and Development of Education and Sports. The Consultant will work in close cooperation with MoES, ASCAP and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that the project is managed efficiently and in compliance with the objectives of the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), Loan Agreement and Project Operational Manual (POM).

1. Duration of the assignment

The Consultant will work in the MoES premises in Tirana on full time basis during the assignment time. The initial duration of the assignment is 12 months from contract signing and/or entry into force of the contract, if specified differently in the contract, with the option of renewal based on satisfactory performance. The Consultant will be offered opportunities to develop professionally by attending relevant short-term training events courses during the term of the assignment.

1. CLIENT’S CONTRIBUTION

The MoES will provide:

* Office space and equipment, internet connection, and means of communication, required for the Consultant to perform the tasks assigned.
* All relevant information required for effective delivery of duties by the consultant.
* Issue necessary official instructions to all relevant directorates, departments and agencies for extending cooperation to the Project Manager to enable her/him to discharge duties effectively.
1. Qualifications, experience and skills

The Consultant should have:

* Minimum Master’s degree in education or related social science field.
* At least 5 years of overall professional experience in education/teacher or related social science field.
* Familiarity with the functioning of the government, particularly the Ministry of Education and Sports in Albania.
* Knowledge about the education sector or related social science field..
* Team leadership skills with ability to work in a matrix framework.
* Capacity for independent functioning, decision making and problem solving.
* Ability to prioritize, work well under pressure and capable of handling multiple tasks within tight deadlines. Experience working with cross-functional teams
* Excellent written and oral communication skills in English and Albanian language.
* Excellent IT skills in use of Microsoft Office and other software, including project management software.
1. CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

All data and information received from MoES and other sources for the purpose of this assignment is to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to MoES. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization of the MoES.

1. evaluation Criteria

Applicants that fulfill the qualification requirements will be further evaluated based on the below criteria:

General Qualification – 30 points

Experience and skills adequacy for the assignment – 60 points

Language – 10 points

1. Selection

The service will be selected under the provisions of the World Bank Procurement Regulations for Borrowers under Investment Project Financing” dated July 1, 2016, revised on November 2017, August 2018, and November 2020, based on the method of Selection of Individual

Annex 1

**Improving Digital and Foundational Skills.**

Improvement of digital and foundational skills will be primarily achieved through selected Education SmartLabs[[1]](#footnote-1) and additional supporting infrastructure, teaching and learning support (with a strong emphasis on an inclusive approach), alongside systemic capacity-building at 200 primary schools.

This initiative will also support the piloting of digital solutions for remote learning in one collective school and one remote school where the majority of learners are from the Roma community. The SmartLabs will be primarily used to teach digital and foundational skills (starting with numeracy) from Grades 1 to 3, as part of the national curriculum, as well as potentially supporting implementation of the ICT Curriculum at higher grade levels.

In terms of sequencing implementation, it will first support the roll-out of the digital skills strategy and curriculum. Then, once the capacity is built and necessary pedagogic changes are done in year one, it will expand to teaching numeracy (and possibly other foundational) skills. The Program will facilitate implementation of the approved ICT Curriculum, using Code Monkey (a proprietary digital skills platform being used already in Albania and funded outside the Program).

For foundational skills, the Program will start with supporting numeracy skills, identifying a suitable online numeracy solution that can be piloted and used in the 200 SmartLabs supported through this PforR, as well as additional investment in bespoke platforms and content over time (with all platforms functioning under a clearly defined data governance framework to ensure strong data protection, especially for children). In all instances, Program implementation will incorporate the design and implementation of suitable assessment frameworks to assess children’s grade-appropriate acquisition of knowledge and the contribution made by the SmartLabs intervention to their improvement.

A Steering Committee will ensure strategic implementation overview, high-level inter-institutional coordination and a whole-of-government approach to implementation of the Program

A Working Groups (WG), composed of high-level representatives, will provide policy advice and oversee the overall implementation, including technical aspects of Program implementation on the SmartLabs.

The AKSHI is the implementing agency responsible for the achievement of the Program results. It has a competent and technically qualified team which is highly committed to implementing the Digital Transformation program of the GoA.

To strengthen data collection and result monitoring of the Program, and to help meet the fiduciary responsibilities under the IPF, the AKSHI will set up a dedicated Coordination Unit (CU). The CU set up within AKSHI will support the overall monitoring of the proposed Program, including data collection, implementation of the M&E plan, verification of DLIs and fiduciary responsibilities.

MoES will lead activities on the SmartLabs from the educational and learning perspective, including the learning content development and deployment, teachers’ capacity building and curriculum upgrading, as well as providing data for the learning monitoring and accountability system. MoES will assign a team for the for the successful implementation of the PforR, with internal staff and external experts. This team is expected to work closely with the CU for all activities under the SmartLabs component.

The CU will hold regular meetings with the MoES SmartLabs team, and, the MoES SmartLabs team would be invited to other CU meetings when SmartLabs issues are discussed.

1. ‘SmartLabs’ are judiciously selected packages of ICT infrastructure, broadband internet connections, and furniture arrangements that can be used flexibly for a wide range of different educational purposes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)