

**Terms of Reference (ToR)
for the Final External Evaluation
of the Project**

“P.E.D.A.K.O.S. – Preschool Education Development Alliance for Kosovo”

KOSOVO

**funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)
[AID 011.860]**

Volontari nel Mondo RTM NGO (RTM) is searching for an in-country external consultant/company to undertake the final evaluation of the three-years Project called “PEDAKOS (1 September 2019 – 15 February 2023).

1. General information

Consultant Report to:

- RTM Expatriate Project Coordinator
- RTM Programme Manager for Western Balkans & Middle East

Overall project budget: 970.000 EUR (100%)

Overall amount of the grant: 873.000 EUR (90%)

Overall cofunding from RTM and partners: 97.000 EUR (10%)

Main Project Donor: AICS – Italian Agency for Development Cooperation

Project implementation period: September 1st 2019 – February 15th 2022

Evaluation Period: January – February 2023

Location: Kosovo

OCSE/DAC sector and sub-sector of intervention: 110 – Education, 11240 – Early Childhood Education

Relevant SDG (Sustainable Development Goal): SDG 4 – Providing quality, fair, and inclusive education and learning opportunities for all children.

Budget: the maximum available budget for this consultancy is 5.250 EUR (gross amount), all types of costs and taxes included.

2. Introduction to RTM

RTM is a non-governmental organization for international volunteering. Our mission is to promote the dignity of the person, protect fundamental rights, and accompany communities in sustainable development processes. We operate through medium- and long-term interventions with the active participation of local partners and beneficiaries and the involvement of local communities. Our cornerstone are the volunteers engaged both abroad in development projects and in Italy in awareness-raising and fundraising activities. Since 1973 it has promoted international cooperation and solidarity projects in Africa, the Balkans, Latin America, and the Middle East and information, awareness-raising, and development education activities in Italy.

For more information on RTM, please refer to our [Annual Report 2021](#).

RTM has been active and present in Kosovo without interruption since the humanitarian emergency of 1999. Initial interventions focused on direct, immediate assistance to the population and on the reconstruction of civilian homes severely damaged by the conflict. After the emergency phase, RTM has chosen to participate in and contribute to the peace process and socio-economic development of the country through interventions in support of families in the fields of education, gender equality, and agriculture. At first, the activities were concentrated in the area of the Municipality of Kline/ Kline (central-western Kosovo), and then extended to the entire Peja/ Pec region and subsequently to the entire country.

Even today, after more than 100 volunteers took turns, RTM is present with an intervention on preschool education in support of early childhood.

For more information on RTM activities in the country, please refer to:

<https://www.rtm.org/en/progetti-rtm/kosovo/>

3. Project partnership

Lead partner: RTM

Local partners:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST)
- Kosovo Pedagogical Institute (KPI)
- University of Pristina – Faculty of Education (UNIPRISTINA-FEDU)
- Childproof NGO (CIPOF)
- Botanika Preschool Institution (BOTANIKA)
- Agency for Socio-Educational Service “Shpresa e Jetes” (SHJ)

Italian partners:

- Municipality of Reggio Emilia – Institution for Preschools and Infant Toddler Centres (Reggio Emilia)
- Reggio Children Foundation (Reggio Emilia)
- E-35 Foundation

Other entities involved:

- Reggio Children srl (service provider)

4. Intervention strategy

The PEDAKOS Project originates from an in-depth Pre-Feasibility Study carried out in Kosovo in the period 2017-2018 by RTM in collaboration with its Italian and Kosovar partners.

The partnership itself represents the great added value of the initiative. On the Italian side, in addition to RTM, that has been operating in Kosovo since '99 with programs of emergency first and development then, the Municipality of Reggio Emilia - Municipal Infant-toddler Centers and Preschools of Reggio Emilia, the Reggio Children Foundation and the E-35 Foundation have joined the initiative.

In this way, PEDAKOS offers Kosovo a globally recognized Italian excellence in the educational sector: the Reggio Emilia Approach, an educational approach born and developed in the infant-toddler centers and preschools in Reggio Emilia and that today inspires over 35 countries in the world.

On the Kosovar side, the project partners are the three main sector public institutions - the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Pedagogical Institute of Kosovo and the University of Pristina - and three non-profit organizations specialized in the management of educational services 0-6 - "Childproof", "Botanika" and "Shpresa e Jetes".

PEDAKOS has the general objective of supporting sector public institutions and private actors in the implementation of the KESP - Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 as regards the preschool component (0-5 years).

The specific objective of the intervention is to increase the quality of educational services offered by public, private and community-based preschools (3-5 years).

Raising quality in early childhood education revolves around three elements, pillars of the intervention strategy:

1 - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: the aim is to increase the professional skills of preschool staff through: study visits to the infant-toddler centers and preschools in Reggio Emilia, a two-year on-site training course, supply of pedagogical material, creation of a pool of local trainers and accreditation of a new training program for teachers.

2 - GOOD PRACTICES: the aim is to support 15 pilot preschools in experiencing an educational approach based on the defense and promotion of children's rights and potentials and co-responsibility between sector actors. To do so, technical and financial assistance is provided to the target preschools for the implementation of pilot initiatives concerning the design of educational spaces, families' participation, reuse of materials and food education. The pilot experiences are then shared with other actors through pedagogical exchanges, seminars and a traveling exhibition.

3 - PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP: the aim is to support the Ministry of Education in the reform and re-launch of the Kosovo Preschool Institutions Council, by encouraging the participation of public, private and community-based preschools and other sector public institutions.

For more information on the PEDAKOS Project, please visit:

<https://www.rtm.org/en/portfolio/pedakos-preschool-education-development-alliance-for-kosovo/>

5. Evaluation objectives

The main purpose of the external consultancy is to make an evaluation, as systematic and objective as possible, of the project, its design, implementation and results. The Evaluation will cover the activities undertaken and the outputs achieved in all the Project Years, with a specific focus on Year 3. An Interim External Evaluation was carried out covering Year 1 and Year 2 and the related Evaluation Report will be made available to the evaluator. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The evaluation should also provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the integration of lessons learned and scaling up strategies.

Principles underpinning the approach to the evaluation are:

- Impartiality and independence of the evaluation process from the programming and implementation functions;
- Credibility of the evaluation, through use of appropriately skilled and independent experts and the transparency of the evaluation process, including dissemination of results;
- Participation of stakeholders in the evaluation process, to ensure different perspectives and views are taken into account;
- Usefulness of the evaluation findings and recommendations, through timely presentation of relevant, clear and concise information to decision makers.

The evaluation report shall provide conclusions and recommendations on the lessons learned and concrete opportunities for the extension of the initiative.

6. Evaluation criteria

- A) **Relevance.** The appropriateness of project objectives to the problems that it was supposed to address, and to the physical and policy environment within which it operated. It should include an assessment of the quality of project preparation and design – i.e. the logic and completeness of the project planning process, and the internal logic and coherence of the project design.
- B) **Efficiency.** The fact that the project results have been achieved at reasonable cost, i.e. how well inputs/means have been converted into activities, in terms of quality, quantity and time, and the quality of the results achieved. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same results, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.
- C) **Effectiveness.** An assessment of the contribution made by results to achievement of the project purpose, and how assumptions have affected project achievements. This should include specific assessment of the benefits accruing to target groups, including women, children and families.
- D) **Impact.** The effect of the project on its wider environment, and its contribution to the wider policy or sector objectives (as summarized in the project's overall objective).
- E) **Sustainability.** An assessment of the likelihood of benefits produced by the project to continue to flow after external funding has ended, and with particular reference to factors of ownership by beneficiaries, policy support, economic and financial factors, socio-cultural aspects, gender equality, appropriate technology, environmental aspects, and institutional and management capacity.

Horizontal (e.g. quality of the internal M&E system, communication & visibility) and crosscutting (e.g. environment, gender) criteria shall also be considered.

7. Methodology

The consultancy should adopt an evaluation methodology coherent with the participatory approach of the project. The consultant/s is expected to conduct a participatory evaluation providing for meaningful involvement by the project partner, its beneficiaries and other interested parties. Stakeholder participation is to be an integral component of the evaluation design and planning, data gathering, drafting of findings, evaluation reporting and results dissemination. The evaluation should therefore focus not only on quantifiable results but it shall also analyze processes and dynamics generated by the project, their scope (in terms of people and other actors involved) and their sustainability. This implies moving away from a mere technical approach and to assess the support brought to the sector and its stakeholders by this project.

8. Duties and deliverables

The external evaluator is expected to conduct a participatory evaluation that shall involve site visits to a sample of project locations and meetings with project implementers, target beneficiaries and other key stakeholders.

Key project documentation will be shared with the evaluator to facilitate the process of evaluation, which will include:

- Project Proposal (concept note, full project document)
- Interim Donor Reports (narrative)
- Interim External Evaluation
- Other key project documents (e.g. partnership agreements, MoUs, experts' reports, visibility & dissemination materials, publications, etc.)

The duties of the evaluator and the methodology used will include the following:

- Design of comprehensive qualitative evaluation tools
- Use of participatory methods
- Comprehensive review of project data and related documents
- Meetings with the project staff and project partners based in Kosovo
- Visits to a selection of target groups
- A debriefing meeting with the project staff and, possibly, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
- Provision of a written Evaluation Report and Executive Summary Report with consideration of the following deliverables:
 - 1) the report should be clear and simply written in English;
 - 2) the main body of the report should not exceed 15 pages and should include an executive summary (not exceeding 1 page) and conclusions and recommendations (no less than 3 pages);
 - 3) technical details should be included to appendices e.g. list of informants and the evaluation team's work schedule;
 - 4) background information should only be included when it is directly relevant to the report's analysis/conclusions;
 - 5) all analysis of achievements must be supported with relevant data and the data source must be included;
 - 6) recommendations should include suggestions of how they can be achieved;
 - 7) the Evaluation Report is to be submitted in a signed soft copy to RTM.

The final evaluation report will be structured as follows:

0. Executive summary

1. Main section: a. Introduction: i. Project description ii. Evaluation objectives and methodology; b. Analysis of the findings according to the evaluation criteria
2. Conclusions and recommendations, including Lessons learned and opportunities for scaling up
3. Annexes: a. ToR Evaluation; b. Names and CV of the evaluator(s); c. Logical framework of the project; d. Map of the project area; e. List of actors consulted; f. Literature and documentation consulted; g. Other technical annexes.

All deliverables are to be submitted electronically to:

- RTM Expatriate Project Coordinator
- RTM Programme Manager for Western Balkans & Middle East

9. Evaluation duration and period

The consultancy is expected to be carried out during the period January 2023 – February 2023.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

- First half of January 2023: desk review of core project documents.
- Second half of January 2023: initial meetings with RTM staff, participation into project events, field visits to project sites, interviews with project partners, target groups and relevant stakeholders, meetings with management staff, participation into project events.
- First half of February 2023: evaluation report writing, draft version to be submitted no later than February 12th 2023,
- Second half of February 2023: final version of the report to be submitted no later than February 28th 2023.

10. Budget

The total maximum amount available for the external evaluation (consultancy fee) is 5.250 EUR (gross amount, VAT and/or any type of other taxes/costs included). This amount also includes travel/local transports costs, insurance, meals and accommodation and translation/interpretation for the field activities.

11. Confidentiality

All the outputs (report, other documents, information) produced by this evaluation will be treated as RTM and its partners' property and consequently confidential. So the above mentioned outputs or any part of it cannot be sold, used or reproduced in any manner by the assigned evaluator without prior permission from RTM.

12. Evaluator's skills

The Evaluator is expected to:

- Be currently resident/working in Kosovo;
- Have documented experience on similar evaluations of civil society projects in the field of early childhood education in the region, particularly in Kosovo;

- Have extensive experience in conducting external evaluations in the context of cooperation for development and a proven record delivering professional results;
- Have sound knowledge of evaluation and data-collection methods;
- Be able to communicate and draft reports effectively in English and Albanian;
- Relevant academic background;
- Experience and expertise in the design and undertaking of programme evaluations using participatory M&E and ROM methodologies is considered an asset;
- Professional expertise in the early childhood education sector is considered an asset;
- Excellent analytical, interpersonal, facilitation and communication skills.

13. How to apply

Interested candidates are requested to submit by email an electronic copy of their expression of interest/proposal in PDF by December 15th 2022 with the subject “Final Evaluation PEDAKOS” to rtm.kosovo@rtm.ngo
Candidates must forward:

- 3 pages (max) motivation letter indicating:
 - The consultants’ suitability for the assignment and match with previous work experience, qualifications etc.;
 - If the applicant is a team, specify how the team will be composed and the division of work between team members;
 - Proposal of the work methodology to be used;
 - Draft work plan and suggested timetable;
 - Economic offer and budget breakdown (in EUR);
 - Provisional availability to fulfill the consultancy as per the timeframes indicated in these Terms of Reference.
- CV/Professional profile of the expert/evaluating team/company (CVs of all individuals included in the consultancy team).

Enquiries regarding the expression of interest/proposal process may be directed by December 7th 2022 to:
rtm.kosovo@rtm.ngo