

SC-PR-37 Terms of Reference (ToR)-ALB 2025 0295

Call for an Expert to Prepare the Local Transition Plan for Roma Children and the Role of Community Centers in the Regions of Gjirokastrë and Tirane.

14-01-2026

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Background on Save the Children

Save the Children is the leading global independent organisation for children. Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

Our vision: A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

Our mission: To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

Our values: Accountability, ambition, collaboration, creativity and integrity.

We are committed to ensuring our resources are used as efficiently as possible, in order to focus them on achieving maximum impact for children.

Background information/context

The project "Roma Children Learn, Reducing Barriers for Education and Development" proposes to build a model based on children's right perspective and address the issues of access, enrolment and participation on quality Early Childhood Care Development (ECCD) and primary education for both Roma boys and girls to exercise their rights for quality inclusive education and support their parents/families equally share community life and promote Roma culture in the neighborhoods of Tirana and Gjirokastra.

This project is part of the "EU Regional Action for Roma Education: Increased Education Support and Opportunities for Roma Students in Western Balkans and Turkey (RARE) phase II", funded by European Union (EU) and Roma Education Fund (REF Romania).

The project responds to one of the main priorities in the current National Strategy for Education of the Ministry of Education and Sports that states "pre-university education system are

ensuring quality education, full participation to ensure inclusiveness and equal access for all children of the age group in preschool and compulsory education, improving the infrastructure of schools and kindergartens according to standards, reducing the number of students per class, training teachers, equipping schools with science laboratories and computers". Roma children and their families in the selected regions will benefit from access and participation to quality learning opportunities, and enhanced capacities of educational institutions to implement inclusive education principles and also supportive family and community childcare practices. Additionally, there will be increased public awareness of the value that Roma traditions and language bring to enriching national culture. To ensure that Roma children have an equal start in ECCD and successful transition to primary education, the project's intervention will address the issues below:

- 1) Roma children access and enrolment to Early Childhood Education (ECD) and successful transition to Primary School Education (PRI).
- 2) Supporting Roma children learning outcomes and promoting Roma Language and Culture through increased capacities of pre-primary and primary teachers.
- 3) Empowering local communities and institutions to overcome barriers like cost, institutional challenges, and cultural obstacles to access quality education.

Objective

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) play a critical role in ensuring children's successful transition to primary education. Roma children and other vulnerable groups often face barriers such as limited access to quality ECCD services, lack of parental engagement, and insufficient school readiness. Community centers have proven to be essential in bridging these gaps by supporting families and schools. This advocacy document aims to provide guidance for local structures, schools, and kindergartens to sustain and strengthen transition practices in Gjirokastrë and Tirana.

The purpose of this consultancy is to design an advocacy document with practical recommendations for local authorities, schools, kindergartens, and community centers. The document will guide stakeholders in implementing strategies that ensure smooth transitions from ECCD to primary school for all children, with a focus on Roma inclusion. The expert will design an advocacy document with recommendations to provide a guidance for local structure, schools, and kindergartens on the continuation of using three components:

- Getting children ready for school
- Getting schools ready for children
- Engaging parents and community to ensure smooth transition from ECCD to school for all children.

For each of three components the advocacy plan will reflect issues related to accessibility, quality educational opportunities / learning opportunities, environment and resources, cultural/socio economic context, professional capacity building and coordination, socio-emotional learning and caregivers/community engagement. The expert will Prepare a comprehensive, evidence-based document with recommendations for local transition plans

and community center engagement. He/She will conduct project site meetings with local stakeholders, assess the current situation regarding Roma children's transition from kindergarten to primary school, and evaluate the role of community centers.

Location and official travel involved

The consultancy may involve traveling to the project sites in (Tirana & Gjirokastrë) which will be pre-agreed with Save the Children staff and will not be provided by Save the Children. Accommodation and travel costs will not be provided by Save the Children. She/he will conduct project site meetings with local stakeholders, assess the actual situation on Roma children transition from kindergarten to PRI and assess the role of community centers.

Services the Supplier will provide

The expert will design an advocacy document with recommendations to guide local structures, schools, and kindergartens in sustaining and strengthening three key components for a smooth transition from Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) to primary school for all children, including Roma children and evaluate the role of community centers:

Desk Review & Situation Analysis (3 days): Review existing policies, local practices, and data on Roma children's transition from kindergarten to primary education. **Identify Gaps and Challenges.** Assess barriers faced by Roma children and other vulnerable groups in the transition from ECCD to school, focusing on inclusivity and equal access

Field Visits & Stakeholder Meetings (4 days): Conduct site visits to project locations; meet with local authorities, educators, and community center representatives to assess current practices and challenges. Analyse how community centers support Roma children's transition and identify gaps and opportunities.

1. **Drafting Advocacy Document (2 days):** Prepare a comprehensive, evidence-based document with recommendations for local transition plans and community center engagement. Highlight the role of community centers in supporting families and schools during the transition and propose strategies for their effective involvement.

Develop Evidence-Based Recommendations

Formulate actionable recommendations for local structures, schools, and kindergartens to strengthen the three components:

- Preparing children for school readiness
 - Preparing schools to accommodate diverse learners
 - Engaging parents and communities in the transition process
2. **Integrate Community Center Roles**
Highlight the role of community centers in supporting families and schools during the transition and propose strategies for their effective involvement.
 3. **Ensure Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion**
Incorporate culturally responsive approaches that respect Roma traditions and promote equity in education.
 4. **Create a Practical Guidance Framework**
Design a clear, user-friendly advocacy document that local authorities, educators, and community workers can implement.



Presentation of the Document (1 day): Present the advocacy document to relevant stakeholders. Presentation of the advocacy Plan in two roundtables (Tirane & Gjirokaster) with the participation of all local actors.

Experience and skill set required

The experts should have the following qualifications to address effectively and timely the specific requirements of this assignment:

- Experts should have a PhD or at least MSc degree in Education/Social Sciences or related fields - 25 points
- Knowledge on National Curricula, Ministry of Education and Sports programs for preschool and basic education, child education and development- 25 points.
- Minimum of five years professional experience on research and documentation in the field of education, ECD and especially in inclusive education with Save the children- 25 points
- Excellent written communication and preparing reports in Albanian and English language - 25 points.

Expected Deliverables

SCI expects the following deliverables to be provided:

Deliverable Number	Deliverable Title	Description	Format and Style
1	Preparation of Inception Report	Preparation of Inception Report (including methodology and work plan)	Word Document
2	Drafting the Advocacy Document	Prepare a comprehensive, evidence-based document with recommendations for local transition plans and community center engagement	Word document
3	Preparation of final Advocacy Document	Final Advocacy Document incorporating feedback from stakeholders	Word document
4	Presentation of the Advocacy Plan on two workshops organized by SC	Presentation of Advocacy Plan to key stakeholders (local authorities, schools, community centers)	PP presentation

Timeline

Estimated Commencement Date: 01.02.2026

Estimated End Date: 30.08.2026

Deliverable Number	Deliverable Title	Submit To	Delivery Date
1	Preparation of Inception Report	Save the children team	15-02-2026
2	Drafting the Advocacy Document	Save the children team	30-04-2026



3	Preparation of final Advocacy Document	Save the children team	15-05-2026
4	Presentation of the Advocacy Plan on two workshops organized by SC	Save the children team	June-July 2026

Acceptance

Preparation of Inception Report – to be accepted by Save the Children team within 15 February' 2026

Drafting the advocacy plan – to be accepted by Save the Children team within 30 April' 2026.

Preparation of final the advocacy plan – to be accepted by Save the Children team within 15 May' 2026

Presentation of the Advocacy Plan on two workshops (in Tirane & Gjirokastra) organized by SC – June-July 2026.

General assumptions and dependencies

SCI will identify key stakeholders to engage in the project through workshops, field visits, and focus groups organized during each stage of the advocacy plan preparation

Payment information

The payment will be subject to the current Albanian legislation tax regime. Timesheets using the template provided are to be submitted at the end of the engagement. Payment will only be made upon receipt of a valid report, accompanied by the timesheet for the relevant period. Timesheet templates and guidance will be provided to the expert by Save the Children project staff. Payment procedures will follow Save the Children policy on fees and terms of payment set out in the contract attached. The payment for this consultancy will be 118 Euro per 10 days of consultancy of which 15% of Gov. taxes will be deducted. The proposed Fee does not include costs related to travel, accommodation and per-diem.

How to apply for the services

The service provider is expected to submit a proposal, including:

CV, expression of interest, and relevant documents in one e-mail to info.albania@savethechildren.org within 19 Jan' 2026 by 17:00pm. Only selected applicants will be notified.

The deadline for responses is: 19-01-2026

Application for: *Expert to Prepare the Local Transition Plan for Roma Children and the Role of Community Centers in the Regions of Gjirokastrë and Tirane.*

The award criteria consist of the following:

Criteria	Description	Score
1	Knowledge on National Curricula, Ministry of Education and Sports programs for preschool and basic education, child education and development.	25
2	Minimum of five years of continuous professional experience on research and documentation in the field of education, EECD and especially in inclusive education	25



3	Expert should have a PhD or at least MSc degree in Education/Social Sciences or related fields	25
4	Excellent written communication and preparing reports in Albanian and English language	25

TOTAL SCORE	100
-------------	-----