



Scope of Work

Consultancy Title:	Early Intervention Expert, Legal review of draft legislation in Ukraine
Location:	Remote
Duration:	4-6 Weeks starting early June
Number of days:	15 days, to be proposed by applicant

Maestral International (<http://maestral.org/>), is working with UNICEF Ukraine, its partners and the Government of Ukraine to advance *Better Care*- an initiative to strengthen the child protection system so that all Ukrainian children have safe and nurturing family care.

Currently, almost all of Ukraine's 7.5 million children are affected by Russia's invasion. Children have been injured, evacuated, or displaced, they have lost family members, and they have missed school. Families have lost income and poverty – including child poverty – has risen, as has food insecurity.¹ Children and families are experiencing trauma, grief, and insecurity. Ukraine's immediate humanitarian crisis is severe and will have long-term and intergenerational consequences. The compounded stressors on children and families have exposed children to increased risk of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and separation from families. The past year has left Ukraine's children at higher risk of experiencing adversity, often multiple adversities, including a looming mental health crisis.

The Government of Ukraine and UNICEF, with key partners, have designed the *Better Care* initiative to take their reform efforts forward. *Better Care* includes ensuring that every child at risk of or experiencing loss of care undergoes a thorough assessment and planning process that helps them access material supports and other services that meet their needs. *Better Care* supports the Government of Ukraine to advance the following three objectives:

1. ***Strengthen families and keep them together*** by investing in social services.
2. ***Support family-based alternative care*** (e.g. foster care, guardianship and adoption) for children without adequate parental care
3. ***Safely reintegrate children in institutions into family care*** while transforming institutions to provide community services that will support families based on their needs.

Better Care will include and be anchored in local governments delivering an integrated package of social services and benefits. The goal of the minimum package is to ensure that each Ukrainian child has the opportunity to live in a safe and nurturing family. The integrated service package includes early intervention, among other services and addresses the pressing humanitarian needs of Ukraine today, while also providing the foundation for a system of care consistent with Ukraine's rapid EU accession process and the related provisions of the EU Child Guarantee.

The Ukraine Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP), with support from UNICEF, is reviewing draft legislation to support early intervention services. Government early intervention services in Ukraine are currently specified for children up to 4 years old that have or are at-risk of having a disability or development disorder. The service provides at-home early detection and support for parental competence and capacity, specifically as it pertains to child development and daily life. A more detailed service specification is included in Annex A.

¹ UNICEF. Humanitarian Action for Children: Ukraine and Refugee Response. 2023.

The purpose of this assignment is to provide an assessment to MoSP and UNICEF to inform possible revisions in the draft legislation that might be incorporated prior to the Government's submission of the draft to Parliament. The assessment will also serve as the basis for both in-country and global conversations about best practices and the way forward for early intervention in Ukraine. The findings of this assignment will further inform ongoing discussions on funding sources and modalities for early intervention in Ukraine, including the roles and responsibilities across sectors.

This assignment will result in a written report to include the following:

- A review of the draft legislation with specific recommendations to ensure global best practices are incorporated, with a specific focus on:
 - Alignment with relevant policies of the European Union
 - Roles and responsibilities across sectors, namely social policy, health and education, with MoSP mandated with a leadership and coordination role
- Recommendations for qualifications and training programs and certifications for professionals supporting early intervention services, per the legislative framework that outlines the potential roles and responsibilities for the Government of Ukraine and/or non-governmental professional organizations

All draft legal documents are available in Ukrainian and have been translated to English using online translation. A list of these documents and their page length (using English translations) are included in Annex B.

It is important to note that legal experience is not required for this assignment. The report should focus on a technical assessment and recommendations, not on the drafting language (unless there is a specific need to address problematic language).

We anticipate this assignment to start in early June, if not earlier and be completed within 4-6 weeks. The number of days for this can be discussed, but we envision a total of 15 days for this assignment.

Applications

Interested applicants should submit the following items to Mari Hickmann (mhickmann@maestral.org) and Joanna Ison (jison@maestral.org) no later than 2nd of June. **Please note applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and this position may fill prior to stated deadline.**

- Expression of interest detailing relevant experience (no more than 1-2 pages)
- CV
- Estimated number of days required to complete the assignment
- Expected daily rate for this assignment
- Contact information for 2 professional references.

Annex A. Specification of the social service: Early intervention service for families raising young children (up to 3 years old inclusive) with disabilities, disorders development or risk of their occurrence (hereinafter referred to as Early Intervention).

SERVICE SPECIFICATION

Type of social service	Comprehensive social service
Group of basic specialized social services in accordance with the classifier	Social prevention
Basic specialized service category	Early intervention service for families raising young children (up to 3 years old inclusive) with disability, developmental disorders or the risk of them occurrence (hereinafter referred to as Early Intervention)
1. Description of the social service	
<p>Early intervention is a social service that provides an opportunity to normalize and ensure the quality of daily life of families with young children (up to 3 years old inclusive) with disabilities, developmental disorders or the risk of their occurrence. The service is aimed at forming and strengthening the competencies of parents in the care and development of the child, creating a developmental environment for the child, improving the child's participation in daily activities and improving the quality of daily life of the family. The service is provided primarily in the child's natural environment, in the child's home or outside, depending on the needs and priorities of the family. The service is provided both upon self-referral by parents and upon referral by specialists.</p> <p>This service can be provided by individuals or legal entities - social service providers who are included in the register of social service providers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.1 The target group is families with young children. 2. 1.2 The priority group is families with young children (up to 3 years old inclusive) with disabilities, developmental disorders or the risk of their occurrence. 3. 1.3 Objective. <p>The purpose of the Early Intervention service is to form and develop the competencies of parents/guardians to create developmental conditions for children with disabilities, developmental disorders or risk of their occurrence, prevent secondary disorders and reduce the impact of developmental disorders in children on their lives. The main intention is to promote social inclusion of families and children.</p> <p>1.4 Objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - early detection of developmental disorders in children; 	

- - Improving the quality of daily life of families raising young children (up to 3 years old inclusive) with disabilities, developmental disorders or the risk of their occurrence;
- - parents or persons in loco parentis acquire new skills and new competencies in child care and development;
- - ensuring the child's transition to preschool education and other programs.

1.5 Expected results

- - early detection of developmental disorders in children;
- - Improving the psycho-emotional and physical condition of parents or persons in loco parentis, reducing stress and tension in the family;
- - Strengthening the educational potential of parents or persons in loco parentis, gaining new knowledge and skills care for a child with developmental disabilities;

- - creating a developmental environment around the child;
- - developing the child's competencies and increasing their participation in daily activities.

2. Scope of the service

2.1 Activities that constitute the content of a social service

The Early Intervention service is provided once a week until the child reaches the age of 3 full years or until the service is terminated for other reasons.

The main activities that make up the content of a social service include:

- - conducting screening - assessing the child's development;
- - regular, weekly meetings as part of the implementation of the individual family early intervention plan (hereinafter referred to as the IFSP) in the natural environment and in the subject's premises (if necessary);
- - transferring knowledge and skills to parents in the form of coaching, modeling, counseling, training in developmental strategies, their application and integration into daily family activities;
- - Selection of special equipment and means of alternative communication for the child, training parents to use them in the natural environment for the child and family;
- - counseling parents on child development, child-parent relations, and the organization of a child-friendly environment;
- - organizing meetings on the child's transition to a preschool or other program and ensuring continuity in this process;
- - counseling parents and specialists of preschool education institutions in the process of transferring a child to an institution or other program;
- - providing emotional support for groups of parents and their families, as well as facilitating mutual support groups;

- - providing educational toys and rehabilitation equipment for rent (temporary use).

In the process, service providers should provide early intervention services:

- - determining the child's individual needs and family priorities, drawing up an IFSP and concluding a social service agreement with parents or persons in loco parentis;
- - Maintaining the IEP of the child and assessing its implementation by parents or persons in loco parentis, conducting supervision.

2.2 Availability of the service

The social service should be provided at the place of residence/stay of the recipient of social services (at home); outside the place of residence, namely during daily activities and in places where the problem arose and exists (at home, on the playground, in the store, etc.), as well as in the premises of the social service provider (if necessary).

2.3 Child safety and protection

The Early Intervention social service provider must ensure compliance with child protection policies and procedures defined by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine. Employees of the social service provider must receive appropriate annual training (at least 36 academic hours per year).

The right to disseminate information about children and families is regulated by the informed consent of parents.

Annex B. List of draft legal documents and estimated page length. Note that the below list is not comprehensive list of all documents that may be required to review for this assignment, and that and individual(s) who complete this assignment will be asked to recommend additional documents to review, focused on global best practices.

Document title	Page length
LIST of knowledge and skills of early intervention team specialists	2 pages
PROCEDURE Identification of families with children with developmental disabilities or at risk of such disabilities	4 pages
CRITERIA for early intervention service providers	6 pages
PROCEDURE providing early intervention services	27 pages
SAMPLE REGULATIONS for an early intervention center	8 pages
SPECIFICATION early intervention services	12 pages
ANALYTICAL NOTE on the analysis of regulatory documents regarding the implementation of early intervention services	10 pages