



Evaluation brief/TOR **Advancing Education Inclusion and Quality in South East Europe Initiative** **Preliminary Assessment of Impact**

Rationale

In 2007, the Education Support Program has launched the regional initiative Advancing Education Inclusion and Quality in South East Europe to address the rising inequity in education. The initiative particularly has looked at the extent to which the school level institutional environment is open for parental participation, as well as the propensity of the parental in school life. Giving parents a voice in school administration and governance, from curricula to budgetary matters, may lead to the fairer distribution of public spending for education as well as greater accountability of decision-makers.

In all South East European (SEE) countries¹ education policies make provision for parental engagement in school governance and administration. However, education experts and civil society organizations active in the field of education in all ten SEE countries have agreed that parental involvement in the life of schools is insufficient and/or inadequate.

To address this issue, the regional research evidence based advocacy initiative has been designed with the aim to:

- Better understand the opportunities created by school leadership for parents to participate in school life and to assess the extent to which equal opportunity for parental participation in school life is promoted.
- Learn about parental needs, expectations and experiences of school efforts to engage parents and their influence on school life.

For this purpose, the Center for Educational Policy Studies (Slovenia), in cooperation with country teams, carried out two cross-country national surveys.

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia

The first survey, in 2008, inquired about the principals' views on the parental involvement. A total of 2,273 hour-long, face-to-face interviews were conducted with primary school principals in 8 SEE countries².

The second survey, in 2009, sought to determine the views of parents, including those belonging to the vulnerable groups. It covered all 10 countries, where a total of 9000 'regular' parents, 1500 'active' parents, 600 vulnerable group parents and 300 principals were interviewed. Both surveys used rigorous scientific methodology.

Parallel to the studies, good practices of school-parent partnerships have been collected and innovative activities for building strong school-parent partnerships have been initiated. The latter focuses particularly on enhancing a teacher-led approach.

The surveys and other activities carried out within the initiative have yielded the important data to inform national education policies and school level activities. The surveys preparations, field work, in-country data analyses and presentations have brought together different stakeholders, opened various issues and initiated discussions. All information and materials related to the initiative are available at www.see-educoop.net/aeiq/

Objective of the evaluation study

The major aim of the study is to develop an evaluation theory in view of:

- evaluating the overall implementation process and achievements of the different stages of the multi-annual initiative;
- assessing the outputs, and medium-term outcomes of the initiative using as point of reference the initial initiative framework;
- documenting the principal lessons learnt in the implementation of the multi-stakeholder partnership approach to systematic data collection and site intervention undertaken as part of the initiative;
- appraising ways in which the initiative impacted on national education policies and legislations related to the provisions for the parental involvement in the selected countries,
- undertaking case study analysis on the ways in which school level activities have affected the school policies and practices on the parental involvement in the school governance and learning/teaching process,

² Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia

Methodology

Interested parties are invited to present an evaluation theory by detailing the assessment instruments building on the: initiative documentation (i.e. regional and country survey data and reports, focus group reports and other initiative documentation, face to face and phone interviews with the involved stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents, researchers, policy makers, CSOs representatives) and field visits to schools and other educational institutions. Staff will provide the necessary contacts and logistic support.

The evaluation team will consist of the main evaluator and 2-3 research assistants. The main evaluator will lead the overall evaluation exercise and will be responsible for the development of the evaluation frame and assessment instruments. The evaluator will be responsible for writing up the final evaluation report. He/she will lead the planning meeting at the location to be decided³ and will finalize the evaluation instruments based on the suggestions from the meeting. The evaluator will be responsible for the work of the research assistants.

Research assistants will assist with the evaluation process and in particular in conducting interviews, administering questionnaires, and collecting data.

Staff will organize a two-day planning meeting at the location to be decided, to finalize the methodology and instruments, as well as procedures and timelines for the study. About 2-3 educational/evaluation experts will be invited to the meeting to advise on the development of methodology and instruments.

Assessment portfolio: Entire documentation related to the initiative, including but not limited to the cross-country surveys reports of principals and parents (8 and 10 countries respectively), national survey reports and other publications, and school based activities reports.

Duration of the study: October 2010 – December 2010

Application procedure:

Please send by **September 20th**, 2010 the following documents:

- Letter of interest that states clearly evaluation/research skills available and experience in the education sector, and understanding of the general education issues;
- CV;
- Evaluation concept that contains formulation of the research methodology and work plan;
- Example of previous evaluative work if available (e.g. evaluation report);

³ Potential locations are Belgrade, Budapest, or London

Documents should be sent to Laura Thorogood lthorogood@osieurope.org. Please refer to the documentation at www.see-educoop.net/aeiq to prepare the evaluation concept.

Travel

The evaluator will be expected to come to the meeting and visit at least 5 of the countries participating in the initiative.

Deliverables

- Evaluation theory and proposed assessment instruments and work plan;
- Draft evaluation report for the first stage by the end of November 2010;
- Final report by December 15th, 2010;

Honorarium and business related expenses

All business related expenses for travel to August meeting and the field trips (airline tickets, hotel accommodations, meals, taxi charges, DHL etc); along with phone costs will be reimbursed. A lump sum fee will be offered as honorarium for the work outlined above. The fee will be paid upon the submission of the final assignment. The lump sum fee is to be negotiated with the evaluator and it will be based upon his/her experience.