

## Call for Expression of Interest

# Capacity building and changing social behavior to improve WASH operations and maintenance in schools

**CEF/MDA/2025/013**

### 1 Timeline

Posted	Jul 1, 2025
Clarification Request Deadline	Jul 18, 2025
Application Deadline	Jul 31, 2025
Notification of Results	Aug 20, 2025
Start Date	Sep 10, 2025
End Date	Mar 31, 2026

### 2 Locations

- A Moldova
  - a Raionul Straseni

### 3 Sector(s) and area(s) of specialization

- A Cross Sectoral Areas
  - a Training, capacity building and capacity development
  - b Youth leadership and participation
- B WASH and Environment
  - a Basic sanitation
  - b Hygiene
  - c Water

### 4 Issuing Agency

UNICEF

### 5 Project Background

Access to safe and sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services in schools remains a challenge in the Republic of Moldova, particularly in rural and underserved areas. While progress has been made in infrastructure rehabilitation, the sustainability of these interventions is at risk due to gaps in operations and maintenance (O&M;), budgeting, and institutional responsibility. To address these gaps, UNICEF is launching a Call for Expression of Interest for National Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to support the implementation of a national capacity-building and social behaviour change initiative aimed at improving WASH in schools. This initiative aligns with Moldova's education and health strategies, as well as UNICEF's Country Program Document for 2023–2027. The goal is to ensure that WASH

services in schools are functional, inclusive, and resilient. This will be achieved through institutional strengthening, capacity development for school staff, including school managers and technical personnel, integration into national systems like EMIS, and student engagement in maintaining and promoting good hygiene practices. UNICEF seeks to build partnerships with the national CSOs that can implement a set of activities in selected schools, in collaboration with local authorities, including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Research, and the National Agency for Public Health (NAPH). The overall approach promotes sustainability and ownership at all levels, integrating cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, inclusion of children with disabilities, and equitable access to WASH facilities for all students and staff.

## 6 **Expected Results**

Output 1: School leadership demonstrates improved ability to oversee WASH facilities by implementing structured and sustainable operation and maintenance processes, as well as improved school development plans Act. 1.1 The implementation partner will conduct a minimum of three training sessions with representatives from 125 schools, including one in-person training course for school managers. School directors and deputy directors will be trained in management and procedures for using, operating, and maintaining WASH facilities in schools, and guided to formulate proper and targeted goals and activities in the school development plan. Act. 1.2 Institutional-level workshops will be held to support the development of school-specific WASH facilities and services, including conducting Operation and Maintenance Plans. Output 2: Increased institutional ownership and financial sustainability for WASH service continuity in schools, and improved coordination mechanisms involving relevant stakeholders, including the local public authorities Act. 2.1 Schools will receive support to plan and allocate resources for WASH-related maintenance, including developing budget plans, identifying funding sources, and aligning efforts with relevant local structures. Output 3: School managers have improved capacities and clear procedures for ensuring clean, safe, and functional WASH facilities Act. 3.1 School management will be equipped with the necessary information, tools and support to instruct and train the technical and cleaning staff. Act. 3.2 Technical and cleaning staff will receive training from school managers on cleaning protocols, minor repairs, maintenance routines, and the use of tools and templates for inspections and reports. Act. 3.3 Cleaning and monitoring plans will be developed and implemented across targeted schools. Output 4: Enhanced ownership and behavioural change knowledge and practices among students through student-led activities and campaigns, contributing to the long-term sustainability of WASH in schools Act. 4.1 Students will be trained and actively involved in WASH clubs and school-wide initiatives, promoting good hygiene behaviour and peer-to-peer learning. Act. 4.2 WASH social and behaviour change (SBC) components, including education materials, will be integrated into all student-led actions. Act. 4.3 School-based WASH SBC communication campaigns will be developed and conducted with the involvement of students, student councils, teachers, parents, and local stakeholders to promote hygiene awareness, best practices, and innovative approaches. Act. 4.4 Schools will be encouraged and supported to organize competitions, exhibitions, or recognition events to boost participation, motivation and creativeness among students Act. 4.5 The implementing partner will develop a Youth-led WASH Activity Calendar in collaboration with students and school management aimed at improving hygiene practices and community engagement. Output 5: Disaggregated WASH indicators are regularly collected through EMIS to monitor existing WASH facilities, tracking functionality, accessibility and responsiveness for WASH conditions in schools Act. 5.1 WASH indicators and facility data will be incorporated into EMIS to support national-level monitoring, planning, and reporting. Act. 5.2 School managers will have the capacity and necessary support to assess and document WASH facilities as per EMIS indicators. Act. 5.3 One online orientation session regarding EMIS will be developed and delivered per region/rayon for the school managers. Output 6: Increased government commitment and investment in sustainable WASH infrastructure and services in schools through supporting nationwide advocacy for WASH in schools Act. 6.1 Facilitate roundtable meetings with the Ministries of Education and Research, Health, and Finance to align WASH in schools with national development goals and sectoral strategies. Act. 6.2 Support the establishment of a national WASH task force or working group, including ministries, NGOs and academia. Act. 6.3 Engage youth ambassadors or student networks to speak at public events and in the media about WASH challenges and solutions.

## 7 **Indicative Budget**

80000.00000

## 8 **Other Information**

Background and Context of WASH in Schools In the Republic of Moldova, the operation and maintenance (O&M;) of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools present numerous challenges that affect the overall health

and well-being of students. A comprehensive assessment conducted by UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Research has highlighted the significant challenges many schools face due to inadequate Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure. One of the most pressing issues is insufficient maintenance. Numerous schools lack the essential resources, adequately trained personnel, and necessary operational and maintenance (O&M;) tools to effectively manage and maintain the cleanliness and functionality of their water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities. This lack of maintenance can lead to unsanitary conditions that pose health risks to students. Another concern is the ageing infrastructure. A considerable number of schools are burdened with outdated and deteriorating water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities that compromise hygiene and require urgent renovation. These facilities often reflect years of neglect, making it challenging to provide a safe and supportive environment for students. Limited accessibility further exacerbates the situation. In several schools, WASH facilities are not designed to accommodate all students, particularly those with disabilities who face additional barriers in accessing necessary hygiene resources. The schools with limited access to water and sanitation services continue to use outdoor pit toilets. In addition to the infrastructure, access, and maintenance procedures of the schools, especially those with limited resources and a small student body. An additional significant challenge faced by the majority of educational institutions is inconsistent supplies. Frequent shortages of essential items such as soap, toilet paper, cleaning equipment, and detergents can have a negative impact on students' well-being and academic performance. Addressing these challenges in a combined manner would increase the number of institutions where students have access to safe and hygienic WASH facilities, which are vital for their health, comfort, and educational success. The impact of adequately managed facilities will also contribute to more diligent behavior among users, including students and teachers. Operation and maintenance play a vital role in ensuring the sustainability of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, particularly in schools. The normal, fully functional status would include water taps that never run dry, toilets are always clean, and handwashing stations are fully functional. This is the ideal scenario that proper O&M; aims to achieve by considering the following aspects: ■ **Continuous Functionality:** When WASH facilities are well-maintained, they operate continuously and at full capacity. This is crucial for maintaining hygiene standards and preventing health issues among students and staff. Imagine the peace of mind that comes with knowing that clean water is readily available every time a student needs to wash their hands. ■ **Preventing Breakdowns:** Regular maintenance is like a preventive medicine for WASH facilities. It helps avoid unexpected breakdowns and extends the lifespan of the infrastructure. This means fewer disruptions and less need for costly repairs, allowing schools to focus their limited resources on other essential areas. ■ **Community Health:** Effective O&M; makes a significant contribution to community health. By ensuring access to clean water and proper sanitation, schools can help reduce the spread of diseases, creating a healthier environment for everyone. Think of the ripple effect—healthy students lead to healthier families and communities. Operational and maintenance (O&M;) practices in schools in Moldova need to be addressed and reinforced, considering the specific challenges posed by limited financial resources for cleaning and maintenance staff. Many schools struggle with tight budgets, making it challenging to allocate sufficient funds for operations and maintenance. This often results in neglected facilities that fail to meet hygiene standards. There is a shortage of cleaning staff, which puts additional pressure on the existing workforce. This can lead to inadequate maintenance and cleanliness, affecting the overall health and well-being of students. Schools need to prioritize fixed-cost resources and explore cost-effective solutions to manage cleaning and maintenance budgets effectively.

## 9 Selection Criteria

Name	Description	Weight
Clarity of activities and expected results		20
Cost effectiveness		10
Experience working with UN		10
Local experience and presence		10
Project management		20
Relevance of proposal to achieving expected results		10
Other	Safeguarding and Inclusion (e.g., demonstrated capacity in child safeguarding, gender sensitivity, inclusion of marginalized groups such as children with disabilities)	10
Realistic timelines and plans		10

## 10 **Attachments**

Description	URL
Concept Note Template	<a href="#">Download the document here</a>

## 11 **Concept Note Template**

[Download the document here](#)

## 12 **For more information on this partnership opportunity, and to apply, please visit**

[UN Partner Portal](#)