

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR LOCAL CONSULTANCY**

**RE-ADVERTISING**

**The applicants who had submitted their applications within the period of initial advertising of this vacancy do not need to re-apply. All candidates will be retained.**

**Sociologist for the Collection and Analysis of Primary Qualitative Data on the Education Sector Review and Targeted Analysis**

**Individual Consultant is expected to perform this assignment remotely (home based) with possible field missions as required.**

**Duty Station:** Yerevan, Armenia

**Supervisor:** Education Specialist, Education Officer (GPE)

**Time-frame:** from early September to end of November (approx. 3 months)

**Purpose of Activity/Assignment:**

The aim of the assignment is to support the data collection and analysis under an initiative of the Government of the Republic of Armenia coordinated by UNICEF as Global Partnership Education (GPE) Grant Agent on three different studies (hereinafter, the Studies): 1) Equity and Fairness-Oriented Analysis of School Classroom Assessment Practices to Identify Policy Recommendations for Improvement of Student Learning Outcomes (hereinafter, Study 1), 2) Analysis of School Teacher Management System in Armenia (hereinafter, Study 2), and 3) Comprehensive Sectoral Analysis of Pre-Primary Education (hereinafter, Study 3). The Analysis and major Study activities are conducted by each of the three Study Teams, which were hired by UNICEF through a competitive selection process. Under this assignment, the Sociologist (a total of three experts could be hired for this role), will be responsible for supporting the Study Teams, composed of one or two Senior and two Junior Experts and led by Team Leaders, with primary data collection, processing and analytical activities.

The specific objectives under this assignment are:

- to support the pre-test of instruments and sampling approaches for the Studies,
- to provide recommendations to the Study Teams on methodology and tools improvement;
- to conduct a specified number of Key Expert Interviews (KEI), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and to moderate/assist a specified number of focus group discussions (FGDs),
- to prepare full transcripts of the collected primary data as per Study Teams' guidance,
- to assist the Study Team in data thematic coding and data analytics.

The Studies and analyses shall seek to explore:

For Study 1:

- What would be the optimal theory and practice of classroom assessment as proposed by advanced international scholarly work and practice?
- To what extent is the current classroom assessment practice fair to and promotes equitable learning for all students?
- What are the key stakeholder views and understandings of classroom assessment, both in practice and in theory, and how they compare to the advanced international literature and practice reviewed?
- What are the key constraints and resources (current or required) to increase the quality of classroom assessment that is fair and promotes equitable learning for all students?
- To what extent are the contexts and assessment programmes consistent with other elements of the wider education system, for example with learning standards and curriculum, the structure of the education system, national education priorities?

For Study 2:

- To what extent are Armenia's strategies (policies) for recruiting and inducting appropriate teaching staff comprehensive and well-justified including in reference to advanced international theory and practice?
- To what extent do Armenia's existing policies for teacher retention ensure effective, favourable and supportive working conditions including in reference to advanced international theory and practice?
- To what extent do Armenia's teacher continuous professional development (CPD) policies meet core principles of effective CPD in reference to advanced international theory and practice?

For Study 3:

- The analysis shall target the following components of pre-primary education system: curriculum implementation, workforce development, family and community engagement, and enabling environment.

**Key stakeholders** of the Studies are the government line ministries, namely the Ministries of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (MoTAI), MESCS, sub-national and local authorities, UNICEF, EU and dedicated CSOs.

The knowledge generated by the study should be used by UNICEF Armenia to inform and amplify its future activities and projects in the country and will also be used by other national stakeholders to further refine the quality, cohesiveness and timeliness of policies in the field of general education.

#### **Scope of Work:**

Based on the requests from the Team Leaders, the Consultant will be responsible for collection of primary qualitative data through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, its duly recording, transcription and analysis for the draft analytical reports.

Each Study methodology follows an approach to data collection that aims to foster obtaining rich insights, addressing all the objectives of the assignment and assuring triangulation of data sources and data collection methods. The detailed methodologies allowing for collection of all required information with detailed sampling strategy, study instruments and analytical approach are developed by the Study Teams and submitted to UNICEF in a form of Study Protocols for approval and quality assurance.

The hired Consultant is expected to get acquainted with the Study Protocols, their requirements and the data collection tools, to pass a training/orientation session with the Study Teams about the data collection peculiarities and study tools.

The Consultant will be personally responsible for supporting the Study Teams with the qualitative data collection component, namely remote/on-line facilitated or face-to-face stakeholder semi-structured interviews and on-line moderated FGDs with the following target groups: pre-school educators, teachers, parents, principals and key-informants from the MoESCS and the National Center for Educational Development and Innovation (NCEDI) as well as subject matter experts. Total number of KIIs and KEIs to be administered by the Consultant is around 5-6 per each target group. Around total of 6-8 FGDs, with up to 8 participants each, should be recruited with the support from the Junior Experts and administered based on the guidance of the Study Team Leaders. Additionally, for Study 3, the Consultant will be expected to make arrangements for KIIs, KEIs and recruit FGD participants, while the administering will be conducted by Junior Experts.

Details of sampling approach, sample sizes and recruitment of participants are reflected in each Study Protocol and will be presented to the Consultant by the Study Teams. The Consultant is expected to provide high-quality interviewing and moderation services, as well as to develop full transcripts from the interviews/FGDs based on the Team Leader's due requests and following UNICEF data collection and data protection ethical standards. Most of the data collection should be organized remotely, using good quality Internet connection and respective applications, as defined by the Study Protocols. The Consultant is expected to provide additional professional expertise and recommendations on the improvement of the Study tools, regularly debrief the Team Leaders and other team members about the challenges of data collection and primary results, participate in within-team discussion and assist during the elaboration of the analytical scheme for the thematic coding of the data and during the coding of the qualitative primary information.

#### **Ethical Considerations**

The assessment approach and data collection and analysis methods should focus on gender and human rights aspects, be responsive and appropriate for analyzing the gender equality, human rights issues, including child rights issues.

Gender equality, equity and human rights considerations are elaborated by the Study Teams during the inception phase and should be addressed by the Consultant throughout his work in the field and across the final reports. Ethical dimensions should be taken into consideration by the Consultant, discussed and measures taken to ensure those. More specifically, prior to conducting interviews the respondents' informed consent should be ensured, age-appropriate language and approaches to data collection involving children should be used. The anonymity and confidentiality of individual data will be protected, and ethical guidelines will be followed as set out by United Nations (UN) Evaluation Group in its standards and norms. Adherence to the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis<sup>1</sup>, Strategic Guidance Note on Institutionalizing Ethical Practice for UNICEF Research<sup>2</sup> and Technical note on Children Participating in Research, Monitoring and Evaluation<sup>3</sup> should be ensured by the Consultant.

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<sup>1</sup> See UNICEF PROCEDURE ON ETHICAL STANDARDS IN RESEARCH, EVALUATION, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS (2021), PROCEDURE/OOR/2021/001 <https://gdc.unicef.org/media/9241/download>

<sup>2</sup> See Strategic Guidance Note on Institutionalizing Ethical Practice for UNICEF Research

<sup>3</sup> See Children Participating in Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

<b>Work Assignment Overview</b>			
Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline	Estimate Budget
<b>Inception Phase</b> -getting familiar with the Study Protocols and the Study tools; -passing an orientation or training sessions with the Team Leaders about the Study Methodology, data collection/analytics and ethical aspects.	Minutes from the meeting/s with the study teams QA about the Study Protocols and data collection tools	End of September, 2021	
<b>Fieldwork Phase</b> - Collecting qualitative data through in-depth interviews; - Collecting qualitative data through remote KEI/KIIs, FGs and elaboration of transcripts; - Data cleaning and quality control; - Submitting of transcripts and short summaries.	Documentation of fieldwork implementation, including the full transcripts/audio-files of in-depth interviews, KEI/KII and FGDs	End of October, 2021	
<b>Analysis and Reporting</b> - assistance in the design of the analytical scheme and data thematic coding, selection of testimonies/verbatim quotations for the Final Reports; - participation in de-briefing sessions with the Study Teams on Team Leaders' request.	Coded transcripts  Selected testimonies/verbatim quotations for the Final Reports	End of November, 2021	

<p><b>Minimum Qualifications required:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>Enter Disciplines</p> <p>Advanced university degree in Sociology, Social Policy or Social Work. A PhD degree would be a strong asset.</p>	<p><b>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 4 years of documented experience in the field of Sociology.</li> <li>• No less than 5 years' experience in qualitative interviewing or FG moderation/assistance, including in the field of Education.</li> <li>• Experience with elaboration of transcripts and data thematic coding.</li> <li>• Recorded experience of participation in designing research projects, studies, evaluations and household surveys, direct involvement in qualitative data collection and data analysis (links to published research and certificates from trainings relevant to the TOR to be provided).</li> <li>• Proven ability of working in teams and expert groups as well as of working in international and multicultural environments.</li> <li>• Fluency in written and spoken English.</li> <li>• Data management skills through application of NVIVO or other relevant packages will be an asset.</li> <li>• Previous experience in working with UN agencies will be an asset.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Terms of the application:</b></p> <p>The deadline for the submission of applications is <b>September 5</b>. Applications should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover letter;</li> <li>• CV;</li> <li>• Financial Proposal;</li> <li>• Published research and analytical documents relevant to the TOR;</li> <li>• Examples of published work (paper, abstract, proceedings) in top international conferences and SCOPUS-indexed high-quality journals will be an asset.</li> </ul> <p>All qualified applicants should apply online, using the UNICEF E-Recruitment system and following the online application link. Incomplete applications will not be considered.</p> <p>Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered "staff members" under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF's policies and procedures, and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.</p>	