

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Individual Consultant to support evidence scanning, case documentation, and synthesis for Scaling What Works for Children: Compendium of Good Practices in Eastern and Southern Africa

CONTRACT MODALITY	Individual Consultancy
DUTY STATION	Nairobi, Kenya – home based
DURATION OF CONTRACT	4 months

Purpose of Assignment

UNICEF ESARO is developing Scaling What Works for Children: Compendium of Good Practices in Eastern and Southern Africa to support implementation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2026–2029, which calls for a shift away from fragmented, small-scale efforts toward government-led policies and programmes that deliver results for children at scale through differentiated pathways. The compendium will help Country Offices learn from and prioritize system-embedded solutions and will also support partner engagement by demonstrating UNICEF’s value-add in enabling measurable results at scale through policy support, systems strengthening, partnerships, and evidence generation.

The compendium will focus on policies and programmes in Eastern and Southern Africa and will be structured around the five Strategic Plan Impact Results, with three illustrative good practice programmes per Impact Result for approximately 15 cases. Each case will be documented using a standardized FSID-based format to support comparability and practical use for Country Office planning and policy dialogue, complemented by a cross-cutting synthesis of patterns, enabling conditions, and strategic trade-offs.

A short-term consultant is required to augment ESARO capacity to deliver the compendium, ensuring continuity across evidence scanning, coordination, documentation, and consolidation. This consultancy is intended as capacity augmentation and is not a substitute for staff functions. ESARO will retain strategic leadership, analytical judgement, and final decision-making authority for case selection, framing, and validation.

This consultancy contributes to the ESARO Evaluation Section Annual Work Plan 2026 knowledge products and evidence use priorities linked to the Strategic Plan 2026–2029.

Scope of Work

1. Goal and objectives:

To produce the Scaling What Works for Children: Compendium of Good Practices in Eastern and Southern Africa. The compendium will support UNICEF’s strategic shift under the Strategic Plan 2026–2029 away from fragmented, small-scale projects toward government-led policies and programmes that achieve impact at scale through differentiated, context-specific pathways.

The primary purpose of the compendium is to support UNICEF Country Offices in learning from and prioritizing scalable, system-level solutions for children, and to inform strategic planning and decision-making under the Strategic Plan. By bringing together evidence-based examples of “good practices”, the compendium provides practical reference points to inform decision-making.

A secondary purpose of the compendium is to support partner engagement by showcasing UNICEF’s ability to deliver measurable results for children on a scale. The selected good practices will illustrate UNICEF’s comparative advantage in enabling government-led, system-wide solutions through policy support, systems strengthening, partnerships, and evidence generation

2. Activities and Tasks:

Phase 1. Inception

- Participate in an inception meeting with ESARO Evaluation Section to confirm scope, roles, case documentation template, and internal review process.
- Prepare a brief workplan and tracking system covering longlisting, shortlisting support, Country Office engagement, case drafting, and consolidation (including a CO outreach and validation log).
- Draft and refine, with ESARO guidance, the AI-supported evidence scanning prompts and search logic structured by the FSID framework and the five Impact Results.
- Confirm information management and safeguarding steps for AI-enabled processing (Copilot use will be limited to UNICEF-approved environments; no uploading of confidential UNICEF documents to non-approved external tools; all AI outputs verified against source documents before use).
- Use Microsoft Copilot Researcher agent to scan UNICEF internal sources (e.g., COARs, evaluations, internal reviews and assessments) and generate an initial longlist of candidate policies and programmes.
- For each candidate, extract and organize preliminary descriptive information including programme or policy focus, country and contextual notes, geographic scope, indicative scale pathway, UNICEF role, partnerships, and available evidence sources.
- Produce an evidence longlist package with a concise screening summary that applies the agreed methodological criteria and FSID lens, clearly noting that AI outputs support efficiency and pattern recognition only.
- Prepare a shortlisting brief for relevant Centres of Excellence (COE) and Regional Advisors covering the longlist, evidence availability notes, and FSID-informed screening points by Impact Result.
- Coordinate consultations with COEs and Regional Advisors to capture expert judgement, including any additional candidate programmes or policies proposed by Advisors.
- Maintain a transparent shortlisting log that records decisions and rationales and results in a provisional shortlist of three cases per Impact Result (approximately 15).

Phase 2. Country Office Engagement and Validation

- Coordinate Country Office engagement for each shortlisted case, including scheduling calls, sharing a validation checklist, and requesting supporting documentation and evidence references.
- Facilitate structured inputs from Country Office programme staff on programme design, implementation modalities, pathway to scale, differentiation in context, results evidence, UNICEF role and comparative advantage, partnerships, and sustainability mechanisms.
- Validate factual accuracy, completeness, and currency of information for each case, documenting validation status and outstanding gaps.
- Flag evidence gaps, sensitive information, or access constraints early to ESARO and propose practical options (e.g., alternative sources, narrowing claims, or specifying evidence limitations).

Phase 3. Case Documentation and Synthesis

- Draft approximately 15 case write-ups using the standardized FSID-aligned format (assumption: two-page per case target), ensuring consistency across cases and practical usability for Country Offices.
- For each case, compile a concise evidence summary and reference list, plus UNICEF and Country Office contact points for follow-up.
- Support ESARO with cross-case synthesis inputs by identifying recurring patterns, enabling conditions, constraints, and strategic trade-offs across contexts and sectors, structured for decision-use under the

Strategic Plan.

Phase 4. Consolidation and Review-Ready Package

- Produce a consolidated draft compendium package for ESARO review, including integrated draft sections and synthesis inputs, submitted in both clean and track-changes formats.
- Support one consolidated round of ESARO review comments by preparing a response-to-comments log and revising drafts accordingly (within the contracted days).
- Prepare a handover package for copyediting and design, ensuring files are complete, consistently formatted, and include references and annexes as agreed.

3. Work relationships:

The consultant will work under the supervision of the Regional Evaluation Specialist. The consultant will also work closely with relevant COEs and Regional Advisors during shortlisting to capture sectoral expertise and ensure transparent documentation of selection rationales. In addition, the consultant will liaise with Country Office programme staff for shortlisted initiatives to obtain technical inputs, supporting documentation, and validation of factual content. The consultant will coordinate with the ESARO Evaluation Section on packaging and dissemination requirements to ensure drafts are suitable for knowledge product development and design handover.

The consultant will not represent UNICEF in external partner negotiations and will not make final decisions on case selection or validation, which remain ESARO responsibilities.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
<p>Inception Report comprising the overall approach and workplan, an AI-supported evidence longlist of approximately 25 candidate policies/programmes across five Strategic Plan Impact Results with extracted descriptive fields, an FSID-informed screening summary and evidence source list, and a shortlisted case portfolio of approximately 15 cases (three per Impact Result) validated with relevant COEs and Regional Advisors, including documented selection rationales and an updated evidence and contact log.</p>	<p>Deliverable 1 – Inception Report</p>	<p>04/06/2026</p>
<p>Completed Country Office engagement and validation log for all shortlisted cases, including confirmed programme details, evidence availability assessment,</p>	<p>Deliverable 2 – Validated Case List</p>	<p>29/06/2026</p>

and identified gaps with proposed resolutions.		
Draft Compendium package structured around the five Strategic Plan Impact Results, featuring three illustrative good practice programmes per Impact Result, resulting in approximately fifteen cases overall.	Deliverable 3 – Draft Compendium package	03/09/2026
Final Consolidated Integrated compendium package submitted in clean and track-changes versions, including synthesis inputs and a handover package for copyediting and design, with one consolidated round of ESARO comments addressed.	Deliverable 4 - Consolidated Integrated compendium package	29/09/2026

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.

Important Notes

- 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.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that the health insurance (and visa if applicable) required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.
- UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

**QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES
(CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT**

- **Education:** Advanced university degree (Master's) in evaluation, public policy, international development, social sciences, public health, education, economics, or a related field.
 - **Work experience:** Minimum 8 years of relevant professional experience (P4 equivalent) supporting evaluations, evidence synthesis, systems-oriented programming analysis, and UNICEF or UN knowledge products.
 - **Language requirements:** Excellent analytical, drafting, and written communication skills in English.
 - **Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:**
 - Demonstrated experience producing concise case studies, briefs, and synthesis products for decision-makers, with strong drafting and editing skills.
 - Experience with Microsoft Copilot tools is an asset.
 - Strong understanding of systems change and scaling pathways in development programming, including government-led policy and programme scale-up.
 - Knowledge of UNICEF programming, particularly in the ESA region.
 - Practical experience in evidence scanning, documentary review, and structured synthesis.
 - Ability to apply an analytical framework.
 - Demonstrated skill in coordinating with multi-country stakeholders, including facilitating structured consultations with Country Offices and technical staff.
 - Able to utilize AI tools or large language models to support evidence processing, with appropriate safeguards, verification steps, and documentation of source provenance.
 - Familiarity with UNICEF programme planning and evidence products (Country Programme Documents, explanatory notes, Situational Analysis, Country Programme Evaluations, thematic evaluations, internal reviews) is a strong advantage.
 - Must exhibit the UNICEF Core Values of:
 - Care
 - Respect
 - Integrity
 - Trust
 - Accountability
 - Sustainability
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