

**TERMS OF
REFERENCE
CONSULTANT**

Section: Child Protection Section Date: 04/12/2020
 Title: Building resilience of Children in the Sahel Mali,
Mauritania and Niger Duty station: Home based+field missions
 Reporting to: Child Protection Specialist (Emergency)
 Contract type: Consultant Duration:
54 working days over a period of 4 months Start date: 15 February

Section	Content
Background	<p>The surge of emergencies across the Sahel region is having a devastating impact on the survival, education, protection and development of millions of children. Natural as well as manmade disasters, including armed violence, climate change, and more recently the dramatic impact of the COVID19 pandemic, add to the already significant chronic challenges children face. Limited geographical coverage and capacities of social services, lack of opportunities for young people, including access to safe and quality education, gender power inequalities and weakened community and family networks often leave children with few resources that they can turn to. As a result, many children are in psychosocial distress, face high risks of violence, economic or sexual exploitation due to high levels of poverty, child marriage, unsafe migration, and are increasingly victims of grave violations including killing and recruitment within armed groups.</p> <p>In Mali, Niger and Mauritania the already precarious living conditions of more than 26 million children due to the lack of resources, limited access to basic social services and the impact of armed conflict have recently been further aggravated by the socioeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has created significant additional pressure on already overburdened social and health service delivery systems and has exacerbated the existing vulnerabilities of the most at risk children.</p> <p>Children in these countries face increasing threats to their care and protection not only as a direct result of the humanitarian crisis but also as a result of the measures taken to contain them. In this context, it remains essential to understand the nature of risks, their impacts and the mechanisms that can help children protect themselves and be better protected from violence and exploitation, both by reducing risks and increasing access to services.</p> <p>In December 2019, the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany) - BMZ launched a four-year programme, in partnership with UNICEF and the country governments, to strengthen child protection systems across Mali, Mauritania and Niger. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the BMZ has allocated an additional 10 million Euros to the three countries to reduce</p>

	<p>disease transmission, address service disruptions, and mitigate the secondary impacts to the already weakened systems.</p> <p>Building the resilience of vulnerable children is at the heart of child protection interventions within the BMZ approach. It is rooted in a social-ecological model, which envisions a set of complementary interventions that primarily aim to (i) socially and economically empower children and young people, (ii) ensure that families have the means and capacities to help their children grow, (iii) ensure that communities are inclusive and provide a safe environment for children, and (iv) ensure that institutions and legal frameworks provide children with a normative framework and the services necessary for their development. It is part of a child protection system approach that considers the specific environment in which Sahelian children grow up, which often can be defined by limited access to and/or weak social services, and prevalence of risk factors that could be harmful to children including extreme poverty, exposure to violence, recruitment into armed groups, and child marriage.</p> <p>Within the overall BMZ resilience project and framed by the regional Key Results for Children as well as UNICEF’s Child Protection Strategy for Western and Central Africa, a set of interventions aiming at reducing the risks and their respective impacts, building the capacities of children to better cope with their environment and to rapidly recover from regular shocks, including during COVID-19, are being used across Mali, Niger and Mauritania.</p> <p>Given the different promising approaches adopted by country offices, the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) wishes to better understand (i) the different risks that children are facing and their respective impact upon the wellbeing the safety and the protection of children, (ii) the set of interventions that effectively contribute to children’ resilience, how they interact with each other, how humanitarian and development interventions can complement each other, the core set of interventions of a child protection Resilience Programme and the replicability of such models for implementation in other countries.</p>
Objectives	<p>The overall objective of this study is to (i) identify the risks that may affect safety wellbeing and protection of children as well as their potential respective impacts (ii) identify the most relevant interventions to strengthen the resilience of girls and boys using a life-cycle approach that examines the different stages of childhood while keeping a gender perspective, (iii) to understand how the set of interventions included in the BMZ project thus far have helped children, their families and communities to better cope with overlapping humanitarian and pandemic crises, through the experiences and perspectives of children, families, communities and child protection practitioners (iv) to identify the possibility of replicating, in other contexts, the most relevant actions taken to strengthen children's resilience.</p>

	<p>By analyzing the relevance of complementary approaches and interventions, such as supporting youth empowerment through life skills and school reintegration programmes; strengthening of the protective environment through parenting programmes, and ensuring service delivery through decentralized systems, their respective outcomes, their interlinkages with each other and with health, education, justice and social protection, and their effectiveness in terms of coverage and reaching populations in conflict-affected areas with few resources, by comparing perspectives between different stakeholders including children, UNICEF aims to refine its understanding of the specificities of the Sahelian context and better define the different components that constitute a child protection approach to resilience. Ultimately, this analysis should help to equip other countries that want to engage more proactively in building children’s resilience. It should follow a socio-ecological approach as an overall framework of analysis.</p> <p>While proposing appropriate measures and methodologies to facilitate consultation with children without causing them further harm, consideration should also be given to the views of professionals in the child protection sector, in particular representatives of public social services (social, legal and health workers), civil society organizations (including members of the child protection area of responsibility) and external partners such as the donor community involved in these issues.</p> <p>By analyzing the relevance of complementary approaches and interventions, their respective outcomes, their interlinkages with each other and with health, education, justice and social protection, and their effectiveness in terms of coverage and reaching populations in conflict-affected areas with few resources, and by comparing perspectives between different stakeholders including children, UNICEF aims to refine its understanding of the specificities of the Sahelian context and better define the different components that constitute a child protection approach to resilience. Ultimately, this analysis should help to equip other countries that want to engage more proactively in building children’s resilience. It should follow a socio-ecological approach as an overall framework of analysis.</p>
Scope of work	<p>Programmatic Scope: The assignment aims to better understand what we are learning about UNICEF’s key child protection strategies, enshrined within the overall BMZ resilience project, that contribute to children’s resilience with a particular focus on interventions that help children to better cope with a fast evolving context, characterized by multiple and often overlapping hazardous risks that can hurt their psychosocial and physical wellbeing.</p> <p>Geographical Scope: The study will cover geographical zones where UNICEF-supported child protection interventions are carried out in Mali, Mauritania and Niger in particular the regions where BMZ package of interventions are implemented. In order to review the relevance of the intervention package in different contexts, this study should, with the support of country offices, cover areas considered to be vulnerable, areas that are indirectly or directly affected by</p>

	<p>humanitarian crisis. During the consultation process, exchanges with child protection practitioners in the Western and Central Africa region are expected to strengthen analysis and validate information collected in the 3 focused countries. A field visit in each of the three countries is also planned, pending the security and health context.</p> <p>Chronological scope: This study will span the period from implementation of BMZ project until 31 March 2021. It is however expected that the consultant will give consideration to the theory of change and corresponding interventions prior to the project and how they were taken up and influenced any adaptations throughout the course of the project.</p>																												
Deliverables and Schedules	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="360 529 402 562"></th> <th data-bbox="402 529 790 562">Activity</th> <th data-bbox="790 529 938 562">Timeline</th> <th data-bbox="938 529 1214 562">Responsible</th> <th data-bbox="1214 529 1448 562">Deliverable</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="360 571 402 1087">1</td> <td data-bbox="402 571 790 1087"> <p>Literature/Desk review Conduct a Desk Review of existing literature linking child protection and resilience. Review existing evidence and data, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available quantitative and qualitative data, including grey literature, reports and news stories related to child protection and COVID-19 in each of the three countries. 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Timing	The assignment is expected to start in January and will cover 54 working days, over 4 months, and will include the proposed below timeline for deliverables.																												

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review (10 days): Collect existing literature linking resilience and child protection, specific relevant literature (project reports, dashboards) existing in targeted countries, as well as relevant documentation on the interventions of child protection to address the impact of COVID19. • Inception report Including methodology (10 working days): Identify internal stakeholders; agree working methodology with technical colleagues, plan phases of the assignment; and set clear timelines and define processes for information requests and coordination of inputs. • Data Collection (24 working days): Field visits to sites with BMZ CP interventions; Interviews with key informants, focus groups and validation workshop in each country. • Reporting (10 days): Narrative proposal, review process and integration of all inputs from COs. <p>Number of days for each phase are indicative and may vary across the phases depending on the realities of the assignment.</p>
Reporting Requirements	<p>The Consultant will work under the supervision of the WCARO CP specialist (Emergency), as well as with a technical committee composed of the WCARO CP Specialist (Knowledge Management), the Resilience Specialist and the Monitoring data and research senior Specialist and in close consultation with the Child Protection and PM&E teams from the 3 country offices (Mali, Mauritania, Niger). He/ she will liaise with other sections as needed.</p> <p>Work will be conducted in English and French. Regular progress meetings and consultations will be organised on the assignment.</p> <p>All deliverables should be submitted in English and in French electronically to the supervisor.</p>
Profile Requirements	<p>International Consultant</p> <p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advanced university degree (Masters or higher) in social sciences, law, international development or any other related field <p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 8 years’ experience in child protection, including with a geographical focus on West Africa • Demonstrated knowledge in conducting studies related to child protection, including consultations with various stakeholders (community members, children, child protection practitioners etc.) • Advanced knowledge and understanding of concepts such as risk reduction, conflict mitigation and peacebuilding, or do no harm and how it applies to the Child Protection sector • Experience or good understanding related • Excellent analytical and proposal writing skills – candidate should provide evidence from previous assignment deliverables • Ability to work efficiently and effectively with project members/partners in various locations and from multiple organizations • Ability to integrate different experiences, methodologies, and approaches from a diverse range of stakeholders, organizations, and technical experts from multiple sectors • Flexibility to adapt to any subsequent changes in the terms of reference based on feedback from technical colleagues <p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency in English and French is required • Excellent English writing skills required

Administrative Issues	<p>This is a home-based consultancy with field visits. UNICEF is not responsible for providing equipment (laptop, software, SIM card, etc.) nor for living expenses.</p> <p>Regular (weekly / bi-weekly) progress updates with the supervisor will be organized over Skype.</p> <p>The payment will be done for the number of working days effectively used based on the timesheet and submission of satisfactory deliverables as foreseen for this assignment.</p> <p>NB: kindly fill in your profile correctly when applying on the UNICEF website. A misinformed profile will not be considered. Please indicate your ability, availability and daily/monthly rate (in US\$) to undertake the terms of reference above. Applications submitted without a daily/monthly rate will not be considered. Also, please mention the earliest date you can start.</p>
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