

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND in BELARUS

Terms of Reference for National Consultant

National Consultant on Child Protection

Type of contract: *National individual consultancy*

Duration: **(11.5 months)**

1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION:

Belarus is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The implementation of the CRC requires a comprehensive policy and legislative approach and the establishment of various mechanisms for the implementation of child's rights. One of the basic rights, mentioned in CRC is the right to be protected from violence and to live in a family environment.

While the Government recognizes that the family provides the best care and opportunities for children, support to vulnerable families needs to be improved. Children are placed in state care when there has been abuse or neglect in the family, where specialized institutions are providing rehabilitation services for children with disabilities or, when children have been in conflict with the law. Belarus has introduced fostering and family-type group homes, but a high number of children still live in residential institutions (5,881 in 2020)¹.

UNICEF Belarus supports an inter-sectorial national dialogue on de-institutionalization (DI) with a special focus on children with disabilities and young children under three years (U3). In 2020, a multisectoral plan on DI for children and youth (2020-2023) was developed, serving as a first step towards institutional reform to promote effective inter-sectorial mechanisms between social protection, health and education that has clear delimitation of roles and responsibilities for different level of service provision.

In collaboration with the line ministries under review of the inter-sectorial DI working group, UNICEF has designed a new project to provide technical assistance to partners in Vitebsk to support the local level stakeholders to govern the project implementation to improve their role in gate-keeping children, including those U3, and advance de-institutionalization processes.

At the same time, there is a need for strong technical support for advancing social service work across agencies of the responsible line ministries to support families to keep their children safe in their homes to prevent separation or to enable children separated to be reunified safely in their families or alternative family care. This technical support needs to address the internal capacity issues for DI and childcare reform, as well as strengthen social service capacities of local level government and non-government structures.

While only 9.4 per cent of caregivers think that physical punishment is necessary to raise children, 25.7 per cent reported using physical discipline². Bullying by peers or older children was reported by 60.1 per cent of 5th–7th graders from secondary schools and 82.1 per cent from residential care institutions³. Over six years (2013-2019), the number of sexual-related crimes committed against children rose 20-fold (victims of these cases comprised 70 per cent of girls and 30 per cent of boys), of which 80 per cent happened over the Internet⁴. The Government has outlined measures to combat trafficking and sexual exploitation, yet no normative provision on the prevention of sexual or cyber violence against children exists to establish a comprehensive legislative response. Current legislation

¹ National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus, *Social conditions and standard of living in the Republic of Belarus* (2020)

² *MICS6*

³ UNICEF in Belarus, *Violence against Children in Belarus* (2018)

⁴ Analytical data provided by the General Directorate for Drug Control and Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings

does not recognize threats such as Internet grooming and does not criminalize possession of child pornography.

UNICEF Belarus will contract a consultant to support office programme priorities in the field of violence against children and the childcare/de-institutionalization process, with particular attention to integrated assistance for families with children with disabilities and children U3.

KEY TASKS:

Under direct supervision of the UNICEF Child Protection Specialist and in close collaboration with other relevant programme section chiefs, the consultant will support UNICEF Country Office in the following:

- (1) Provide technical expertise to support integrated assistance to families with children aimed to strengthen families capacities to prevent institutionalisation or enable reunification (de-institutionalisation):
 - Support policy dialogue with key stakeholders to promote the right of the child to live in a supportive family environment at national and regional levels;
 - Support child protection section in management of project implementation on prevention of institutionalisation and de-institutionalisation of children, with particular attention to children U3 and children with disabilities;
 - Support the CP section in strengthening MOE and MLSP agencies' capacities to provide integrated social service responses to families with children;
 - Contribute to COVID response to address the needs of children in residential care institutions;
 - Contribute to awareness raising activities focused at promotion of the right of the child with disability to live in a supportive family environment.
- (2) Provide technical expertise to protect the right of the child to be protected from all forms of violence
 - The consultant will support the office or the CP Officer in building alliances between key government stakeholders, IT companies, and mobile operators on promoting cyber safety for kids;
 - Support implementation of child's local initiative on counteracting bullying and cyber bullying;
 - Support activities aimed at raising awareness on bullying and cyber bullying;
 - Support the child protection section to strengthen capacity of National Child helpline as a referral pathway with engagement of key stakeholders;
 - Support development of information materials on cyber safety;
- (3) Provide technical expertise to CP section:
 - Support in preparing programme and donor reports, and other reporting requirements in the office
 - Contribute to UNICEF inputs for development of State National programmes and strategic documents and UNICEF's annual work plans with profile ministries
 - Contribute to development of project proposals on thematic issues

2. DELIVERABLES - TIMELINE:

The work will be reported through monthly progress reports, with tasks agreed ahead of time with the supervisor. Pending the requirements of the programme section, the consultant will be asked to contribute to the programme strategies and implementation which will result in deliverables such as:

- Providing technical expertise to support office's programme on integrated assistance to families, with particular attention to children with disabilities and children U3, as well as protection children from all types of violence
- Drafting of concept papers, recommendations, internal strategic documents and action plans
- Written contributions to gap and causality analysis concerning mentioned spheres, draft narrative reports and other project related documents
- Technical support with implementing partners and other partners/stakeholders in designing and implementing project interventions in the child protection sphere
- Technical contributions to varying reports (e.g. donor reports, annual reports), proposals and other strategic documents
- Participation in facilitation of workshops, training sessions, study tours and other key meetings within the child protection programme
- Other deliverables as required.

3. SUPERVISION, WORK RELATIONS & OVERSIGHT

The work of the consultant will be supervised by UNICEF Child Protection Specialist. The consultant will be working closely with other relevant sections.

4. TRAVEL

If UNICEF determines that the Contractor needs to travel in order to perform his or her assignment, that travel shall be specified in the contract and the Contractor's travel costs shall be set out in the contract: In cases where travel costs have not been set out in the individual contract, the consultant and individual contractors are expected to submit, within ten days of completion of a specific travel, a voucher for reimbursement of travel expenses to the Operations section. Reimbursements shall only be processed if travel was duly authorized in the individual contract or by an authorized manager of the contracting section, in writing and prior to the travel. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for assuming costs for obtaining visas and travel insurance.

5. TIMEFRAME

The consultancy is for a period of 11.5 months.

6. LOCATION

The consultancy is office-based, consultant will be working at the UNICEF office during the regular working hours or providing tele-working during COVID period.

7. PAYMENT CONDITIONS:

Payments will be carried out in US Dollars through a bank transfer to the contractor account upon provision of invoices and based on satisfactory and timely completion of the deliverables.

UNICEF does not provide or arrange health insurance coverage for consultants.

The Individual Contractor / Consultant will receive Paid Time Off (PTO) credit at the rate of one-and one-half days (1.5 days) for each full month of service, to be credited on the last calendar day of the month, and up to 17 days for a maximum of 11.5 months contract.

Days worked per Month	PTO accrued
1-7	0.5 day
8-14	0.5 day
15-22	0.5 day

Sick Leave (SL) is applicable. SL can be a maximum duration of 20 calendar days within any 11.5 months period, provided a medical certificate duly signed and stamped by medical authority. SL shall be prorated and adjusted to the duration of the contract accordingly (if it is less than 11.5 months).

The consultant has no entitlement for maternity, adoption or paternity leave or any other kinds of special leave.

UNICEF will not undertake any liability for tax, duty or other contribution payable by the Consultant on payments made under this contract.

The consultant will be expected to provide an invoice for the actual number of days completed in the reporting month and payment will be pro-rated based on these days.

8. UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE:

Payments to the Contractor under this contract, including each installment or periodic payment (if any), is subject to the Contractor's full and complete performance of his or her obligations under this contract with regard to such payment to UNICEF's satisfaction, and UNICEF's certification to that effect.

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/outputs is incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet deadlines. All materials developed will remain the copyright of UNICEF and that UNICEF will be free to adapt and modify them in the future. This ToR is an integral part of the contract (SSA) signed with the consultant.

9. QUALIFICATIONS OR SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE/ EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Education:

- University degree in social work, law, psychology or sociology

Experience:

- At least 5 years of professional experience in key child protection issues such as de-institutionalization, social work, protection from violence, child's rights and related fields at the national and/or international levels.
- Strong knowledge of the national legislation relevant to child protection issues, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international standards on children;
- Profound understanding and knowledge of best practices and intersectoral approaches to DI of children in the region with special focus on children U3 and CWD;
- Experience of facilitation of the national dialogue on formulating a multidisciplinary vision of DI;
- Strong analytical, negotiating, communication and advocacy skills;
- Experience in cooperation and interaction with government bodies, parliamentarians, think-tanks and non-governmental organizations.
- Experience in partnership with international organizations: EU, UN, OHCHR and other.
- Demonstrated ability to work in a multi-cultural environment, and establish harmonious and effective working relationships both within and outside the organization;
- Experience in project management is desirable.

Language Requirements:

- Fluency both in written and spoken English and Russian.
- Belarusian is an advantage.

Functional competencies:

- Strong management, coordination and facilitation skills;
- Ability to work in team and meet deadlines;
- Ability to collect, analyze and systematize received information;
- Good report writing skills;
- Strong communication skills (oral and written);
- Results oriented, flexible and problem solving skills;
- Ability to cope with pressure and setbacks;
- Excellent computer skills.

10. PROCESS FOR APPLICATION

The interested contractor should submit by December 10, 2021 18.00 the following documentation:

- 1) Technical proposal (CV);
- 2) Financial proposal (with the indication of daily rates);
- 3) Work experience.

Criteria for the selection:

- 1) Relevant experience;
- 2) Availability to perform the ToR requirements and meet deadlines.

All applications will be treated with strict confidentiality. UNICEF is an equal opportunity employer.