Title: International Consultant for the conduct of the Evaluability Assessment of UNICEF Sierra Leone Country Programme (2020-2023)

WBS/Funding Reference/Activity/IR: 3900/A0/08/885/001/011

Type of engagement
☐ Consultant
☐ Individual Contractor

Workplace of Consultant: Remote Work

Purpose of Activity/Assignment:

• Background

UNICEF is seeking an individual consultant to conduct an Evaluability Assessment (EA) of the 2020-2023 Country Programme (CP) of Cooperation between the Government of Sierra Leone and UNICEF. The CP, which is in its first year of implementation, supports the Government of Sierra Leone improving children’s well-being across five programmatic areas: 1) Health, Nutrition & HIV; 2) Education; 3) Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); 4) Child Protection; and 5) Social Policy.

The envisaged EA, as is the case for all evaluations undertaken in UNICEF, will need to be conducted in accordance to the 2016 UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation and the UNICEF Evaluation Policy (2018). In particular, this EA will pave the way for the undertaking of the Country Programme Evaluation (CPE).

The EA is planned to take place for 27 working days during the period September 2020 to December 2020, that is, approximately nine months since the start of the new Country Programme. The timing of this exercise is particularly conducive to the strengthening of the Sierra Leone Country Programme in that it is expected to:

(a) strengthen the programme logic and monitoring frameworks, including the management of risk, within the first year of the Country Programme; and
(b) allow for course correction at the mid-term review point of the Country Programme cycle.

As the CP has already started, this EA will focus not so much on the improvement of the foundations of programme design but rather on the:

• Strengthening of its M&E framework towards a more effective implementation and enhanced measurability;
• Strengthening of risk management considerations in the programme logic and M&E frameworks; and
• Initial discussions of thematic scope of Country Programme Evaluation ToR

1 For more details, please see “Guidance on planning, managing and conducting Country Programme Evaluations in UNICEF”.

• Justification

The vision of the Country Programme of Cooperation signed by the Government of Sierra Leone and UNICEF for the period 2020-2023 is that “more children and women in Sierra Leone, particularly the most deprived, will have
increased access to inclusive quality health, nutrition, WASH, education and child and social protection services”. It is worth noting that the Country Programme contributes not only to the achievement of the Government of Sierra Leone’s Medium-Term National Development Plan 2020-2023 but also to the attainment of a plurality of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). In addition, the CP is aligned with the UNICEF Strategic Plan; UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2018-2021 Outcomes 1-4 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) Sierra Leone 2020-2023. These UNSDCF outcomes are:

- **Outcome 1.** Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security, and Climate Resilience: By 2023, Sierra Leone benefits from more productive, commercialized and sustainable agriculture, improved food and nutrition security, and increased resilience to climate change and other shocks
- **Outcome 2.** Transformational Governance: By 2023, people in Sierra Leone benefit from more gender and youth responsive institutions that are innovative, accountable and transparent at all levels and can better advance respect for human rights and rule of law, equity, and peaceful coexistence and protection of boys and girls, women and men including those with disability
- **Outcome 3.** Access to Basic Services: By 2023, the population of Sierra Leone, particularly the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, will benefit from increased and more equitable access to and utilization of quality education, healthcare, energy WASH services, including during emergencies
- **Outcome 4.** Protection and Empowerment of the Most Vulnerable: By 2023, the most vulnerable, particularly women, youth, adolescents and children (especially girls), and persons with disabilities, are empowered and benefit from increased social and economic opportunities.

Each one of the five key outcome areas around which the CP is structured, has been developed based on a situational analysis of children in Sierra Leone (SitAn) and a variety of causality analyses conducted during the CP design and summarized in the so-called Programme Strategy Notes (PSN). All five areas, which represent the backbone of the CP logical frameworks and results monitoring framework, are also expected to be implemented based on a rights- and results-based management approach.

Following the finalisation of the CPD, UNICEF Sierra Leone developed the Country Programme Management Plan (CPMP) in order to ensure that appropriate resources be allocated to the achievement of CP results. This plan was based on a thorough review of the human and financial resource required not only to achieve the planned results but also to mount an adequate response to a potential humanitarian crisis.

The EA results will be used primarily by:

- The UNICEF Sierra Leone Country Office staff across all sections, and
- Key stakeholders of the Government of Sierra Leone counterparts including: (i) the Ministry of Health and Sanitation; (ii) the Ministry of Water Resources; (iii) the Ministry of Social Welfare ; (iv) the Ministry of Gender and Children’s Affairs; (v) the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development; (vi) the Ministry of Finance; (vii) the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education; and (viii) the National Commission for Social Action.
- All UNICEF programme sections, in consultation with their respective counterpart ministries, departments and agencies, will use the EA results to refine their respective monitoring, data collection and data utilisation strategies, and will adapt their respective CP Theories of Change and result frameworks.
- While the primary use of the evaluability assessment is not to assess the quality of the CP activities, UNICEF’s implementing partners are also valuable stakeholders throughout this process. As the findings generated through the EA will also contribute to improving the implementation of activities, it will be important for the key findings and strategic recommendations to be shared with the envisaged users in a timely manner so as to ensure that they are taken up.
Purpose and objectives

Purpose

The purpose of the Evaluability Assessment is to improve the measurability and coherence of the ongoing CP as well as its level of risk management based on (i) an in-depth review of the CP logic; (ii) a careful assessment of the validity of the CP Theory of Change; and (iii) a diagnostic measuring the availability of data pertaining to key CP results and processes.

It is expected that the participatory approach used during this exercise will help strengthen the links amongst the 5 CP outcome areas thanks to a shared understanding of the CP results and programme logic amongst the staff (both UNICEF and in-country partners) involved in their management and implementation. The exercise should as such produce recommendations for convergence in programming.

Whereas the EA final recommendations are expected to contribute to the strengthening of the CP coherence and measurability, it is also expected to provide actionable recommendations for strengthening of risk informed programming. The EA will assess to what extent the CP logic is sufficiently risk-informed to withstand changes in operating environment and context; as well as the extent to which the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is able to measure i) the effects of risks and ii) the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures. This is all the more necessary given that the COVID-19 crisis introduces significant changes to the operating environment and context, and to the immediate programmatic priorities of both the Government of Sierra Leone and UNICEF, emphasizing the need for a stronger focus on the nexus between humanitarian and development work.

Objectives:

- To assess the clarity of objectives, logic and the overall coherence of the Country Programme;
- To determine how well aligned the CP is to the country context and UNICEF Strategic Plan;
- To assess the equity of the Country Programme results and expected outcomes across gender, disability and human rights and to what extent these considerations are explicitly articulated in programme logic and Programme Strategy Notes;
- To identify how “technology and innovation” is applied across the outcome areas and the extent to which it can be harnessed to enhance programme monitoring;
- To identify gaps in availability of data and in alignment of results across the Country Programme outputs and outcomes, particularly in reference to the output level rolling work plans (RWPs);
- To assess whether the CP logic is sufficiently risk-informed to withstand risks to achievement of results - COVID-19 being one example of a major risk for the CP.

• To assess whether the existing monitoring and evaluation framework is sufficiently risk-informed to measure: i) the effects of risks (such as COVID-19 emergency) on the CP implementation; and ii) the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures in reducing negative effects of risks on achievement of intended results;
• To assess whether appropriate mechanisms and adequate human and financial resources have been put in place not only to collect relevant high-quality data in a consistent fashion but also to achieve the CP expected results.

7 The RWPs expand the UNICEF system of outcomes and outputs, to define key milestone results which contribute to the achievement of the output.

• **Methodology and Technical Approach**

The key areas of enquiry to be addressed under this EA, in line with the UNICEF Guidance Note for Conducting Evaluability Assessment in UNICEF (2019) will include the following:

**Programme Logic**

• The EA will assess the clarity of the causal linkages existing between the different levels of the intervention logic. A key task will be to review the CP Theory of Change and assess whether it is clearly articulated, and whether it has been formulated in such a way that allows the CP to be responsive to external contextual changes. It will be important to assess the convergence and synergies between the outcome areas and how they are expected to collaborate for common results. The EA will also analyse any of the changes already made to the programme logic since the CPD was finalized;
• Secondly, the EA will assess the level of risk-informedness of the programme logic at all levels of the programme and the extent to which the programme is designed according to a nexus of development and humanitarian programming;
• The EA will assess the clarity of the objectives spelled out in each of the Programme Strategy Notes to determine their coherence and alignment with the Country Programme Document, the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021, the Medium-Term National Development Plan 2020-2023; and the UNSDCF 2020-2023. This step will also assess the convergence between Programme Strategy Notes to see the extent to which they converge around the same shared objectives.

**Monitoring and Data Availability**

• The EA will assess whether indicators are in place for each outcome and output, and whether they have been defined (e.g. numerators and denominators) based on clearly defined standards; whether baselines are available for all indicators; and whether target values have been provided, defined adequately and sufficiently stratified for each one of the indicators. The EA should also look at whether measures, tools, and mechanisms are in place to measure cross-cutting priorities and normative principles. The EA will also review and map monitoring systems across UNICEF’s sections and implementing partners.
• The EA will measure whether the appropriate data required to measure and monitor results (including the availability and sufficiency of baselines and targets) is available, and whether it is of sufficiently high quality; and whether the monitoring system in use is reliable enough to generate information at reasonable time intervals to help monitor change and to determine the validity of the indicators, tools and systems for
monitoring, measuring and verifying results. The adequacy and quality of information available from current monitoring systems should also be assessed to see whether it is sufficient to conduct useful evaluations.

- The EA will measure whether the indicators are reliable for decision-making for iterative programme improvements, and whether monitoring data is used to inform programmatic adjustments to implementation quality.
- The EA will assess whether the existing monitoring and evaluation framework is sufficiently risk-informed to measure: i) the effects of risks on the CP implementation; and ii) the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures in reducing negative effects of risks on achievement of intended results. This will include a focus on whether the indicators in results frameworks are adequate for the measurement of risk, the extent to which indicators remain relevant in emergency situations and to what extent relevant monitoring systems will continue to produce data in humanitarian situations.
- The EA will also assess the way equity, innovation, gender and humanitarian action have been integrated into programming, and how these are measured.

**Governance and Resources**

- The EA will assess the organizational readiness (governance, structure, procedures and processes) to support the implementation of CP results and the extent to which human and financial resource allocations are adequate to achieve expected results; and whether sufficient human and financial resources are allocated to support adequate monitoring, evaluating and reporting on results.

**Conduciveness of the context**

- The EA will measure the extent to which the key stakeholders are involved in programme direction and the achievement of results; and what the existing level of ownership is among partners.
- The EA will assess the changes that have occurred in the country context since the development and inception of the Country Programme, with a particular focus on COVID-19, and the impact this will have on the programme logic and any future evaluations. An important question will be to what extent the programme logic is sufficiently risk-informed to withstand changed in programming context while remaining relevant.

**Country Programme Evaluation**

- The EA will identify the priority thematic areas to cover for the country Programme Evaluation, through a consultative process involving UNICEF staff and other key stakeholders. The EA will produce recommendations on the extent to which these thematic areas are evaluable and how to enhance the evaluability related to this thematic scope.

**Evaluability Assessment Questions**

In order to fulfil its envisaged purpose and objectives, the EA will address a number of questions. The final number of questions, consistent with the scope of this exercise, will be decided by the consultant in consultation with the UNICEF Sierra Leone Country Office. Below is a suggested list of questions grouped around four main areas.

- Assess the relevance, logic and coherence of results structures alignment to country context and
coherence of the sector programme/ country programme

- Does the CP have a clear theory of change/logic model? If so, does it/do they address the problems identified? To what extent is it risk-informed?
- To what extent is the results framework of the CP coherently articulated and aligned to country context and national priorities? How aligned (if any) is it to the UNICEF Strategic Plan and the regional priorities? To what extent do the outputs, outcomes and overall goal follow the result chain logic?
- To what extent are the results chains coherent, logical, and characterized by clearly articulated statements?
- To what extent do results statements and the results framework take into account equity considerations to programming and gender-responsiveness?
- To what extent are the intended beneficiary groups clearly identified?
- To what extent are results in the results structure SMART?
- To what extent have key assumptions, risks and mitigation strategies been specified in the results structure?
- To what extent have assumptions about the role of partners, government and UNICEF been made explicit?

- Assess the adequacy and validity of the indicators, tools and systems for monitoring, measuring and verifying results
  - To what extent are indicators SMART?
  - To what extent does the CP staff and partners have capacity to provide data for monitoring and evaluation?
  - To what extent are baselines available for all of the CP indicators?
  - To what extent does the CP have a monitoring system to gather and systematize the information with defined responsibilities, sources and periodicity?
  - To what extent does M&E framework incorporate risk management and the measurement of risk?
  - To what extent are indicators and targets gender-responsive?
  - What are the likely costs of the data collection and analysis envisaged as part of the CP M&E system (actual costs in terms of the time of evaluation staff, programme managers and staff and partners)?
  - Is there a complete set of programme design and monitoring documents available for CP staff and partners? Are these documents accessible and well organized?
  - To what extent is there a viable plan across programmatic areas to generate evidence to fill specific data gaps?
  - Are there plausible plans to monitor partners’ work in a systematic way?

- Assess adequacy of financial resources to meet the expected results
  - To what extent are financial resources aligned with the intended results in the CPD?
  - To what extent are data and systems in place to let UNICEF assess the adequacy of resources to achieve the CP intended results?
  - To what extent are there financial resources set aside for evaluation at the outset of the Country Programme?

- Planning Evaluations
  - To what extent is there demand for evaluation? If no demand for evaluation is there, why is that? If some demand for evaluation exists, is it realistic given the programme design, budget and data availability?
• To what extent is the CP Costed Evaluation Plan realistic and achievable?
• To what extent is there an adequate monitoring, evaluation and learning system that could facilitate the evaluation of the sector programme/country programme?
• To what extent does the CP include a clear plan and related budget for evaluation? Is it clear who will manage the evaluation?
• What would be the recommended thematic scope of the Country Programme Evaluation?

The UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2018-2021 states that gender-related indicators on programmatic results follow the logical hierarchy of the Strategic Plan results and are mapped by the five Goal Areas, organized in two sections:

(a) Integrated gender results corresponding to the themes of gender equality for girls and boys and gender equality in care and support for all children;
(b) Targeted priorities corresponding to the well-being and empowerment of adolescent girls.

Methodology

The EA will be conducted based on the recommendations outlined in UNICEF key evaluation reference documents, such as the “Guidance Note for Conducing Evaluability Assessments in UNICEF” (2019); the “UNICEF Guidance on Gender Integration in Evaluation’ (2016); the ‘UNICEF Evaluation Policy (2018)’; ‘the “Planning Country Programme Evaluations – Summary Guidance”; and the ‘UNICEF Guidance Note: Adolescent participation in UNICEF monitoring and evaluation’ (2019). These documents will be shared with the consultant upon award of contract.

In order to address all the questions listed in the prior section, the consultant selected to lead this assignment will be expected to use a mix of data collection methods as follows:

• A desk-based review of programme documents, processes, and activities undertaken to date:

This will involve broad background reading of past evaluations, relevant reviews, research, and studies. All programme documents including Programme Strategy Notes, the Country Programme Document, Country Programme Management Plan, Annual Management Plan, Rolling Work Plans, project proposals and monitoring plans will also be reviewed.

The second part of the desk-based review will consist of a more in-depth analysis of the CP logic as presented in the results framework, and will focus on assessing the fit among country-level activities, Government Policy and the global programme objectives. This second phase will include reviews of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021; the Sustainable Development Goals; the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2020-2023; the Medium-term National Development Plan 2020-2023; and West and Central Africa Regional Office priorities; other global strategy documents.

This review of all such documents and the subsequent analysis will feed into the development of an Approach Report, which will outline the analysis of the desk review, evaluation approach, stakeholder analysis, and a presentation assessment frames and instruments.

• Key informant interviews of programme staff and selected stakeholders:

The stakeholder interview component will consist of remote key informant phone interviews with Chiefs of Section, section staff, development partners, Government partners and programme implementing partners. Stakeholders will
be identified through initial discussions with the supervising team and the Chiefs of Section, as well as the document review. The Approach Report will include a list of key informants and stakeholders.


• Activities, Tasks, Outputs and Deliverables

The Evaluability Assessment will take place over 27 days during the period September – December 2020.

Activities

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Outputs

The international consultant undertaking the EA will be required to submit the following deliverables:

• **An Approach Report**: following an initial desk review, an Approach Report will be developed to outline the scope and methods to be used for the evaluability assessment, including instruments for interviews, a proposed timeframe and an outline of the final evaluability assessment report;

• **A Draft Evaluability Assessment Report organized by outcome area**: shared with the UNICEF Evidence, Policy and Social Protection section for comments/inputs;

• **Final Evaluability assessment report**: this version of the report, which will include the comments made by the EA Reference Group and the UNICEF CO staff, not exceeding 30 pages when submitted to UNICEF.
The report will need to include recommendations on how to strengthen the CP logic in line with context and resources, improve monitoring, and improve evaluable;

- **Powerpoint presentation**: based on the Evaluability Assessment Report and the overall summary of each outcome area and the programme assessment conducted, along with recommendations to improve evaluable;

**Management, Organization and Timeframe**

**Duration**  
Start date: 20 September.  End date: 31 December

**Timeframe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Duration (Maximum # of Days)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Approach Report</td>
<td>Within two weeks after signing of the contract</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>A draft Evaluability Assessment Report organized by outcome area</td>
<td>Within four weeks after the submission of the Approach Report</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Evaluability assessment report</td>
<td>Within two weeks after presentation of draft of the evaluability assessment*</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td><em>Depending on the deliverables’ degree of compliance with the UNICEF guidance and the level of acceptability by UNICEF, the duration of this phase may vary.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power point presentation</td>
<td>Within one week after review by UNICEF</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>27</strong></td>
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**Governance and supervisory arrangements**

The EA will be managed by UNICEF Sierra Leone Evidence, Policy and Social Protection section. Regular Skype calls and updates will be required between the consultant and UNICEF throughout the assignment. The Regional Evaluation Advisor of the UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa will provide quality assurance during the exercise.

An Evaluation Reference Group will be formed made up of in-country key focal points chosen from Government counterparts, and UNICEF stakeholders from both the Sierra Leone Country Office and the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO). The Reference Group will provide advice on the validity and quality of the evaluability assessment approach developed by the evaluator and ensure that it is appropriately participatory and in line with the Terms of Reference. The Reference Group will also validate the EA findings and recommendations. Throughout the evaluability assessment the Reference Group will also ensure broad ownership over the process and the results among stakeholders, ensuring that strategic discussions are held to reflect upon the findings and recommendations.

The EA recommendations will also feed into the CP Mid-Term Review. Within 60 days of accepting the final EA
report, UNICEF will prepare a management response, in discussion with the Reference Group, which will clarify whether they fully accept, partially accept or reject each one of the EA recommendations. Lastly, the EA will be uploaded to the Evidence Information Systems Initiative (EISI), and the implementation of the recommendations will be tracked over time.

- **Budget and Remuneration (for planning purpose only). Final fees will be negotiated by HR**

Deliverables and payment schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Number of Work Days</th>
<th>Payment Schedule</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Approach Report detailing methodology and work plan, as well as the structure of EA final report</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A draft Evaluability Assessment Report</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Evaluability Assessment report incorporating all comments from UNICEF and stakeholders</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Power point presentation</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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- **Conditions of Work**

  - The consultant will be based remotely for this assignment.
  - The Consultant will be expected to complete certain mandatory courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Year:</th>
<th>Requesting Section/Issuing Office:</th>
<th>Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>EPSP</td>
<td>The assignment requires a consultant with strong expertise in evaluation and evaluability assessment.</td>
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**Consultant selection method:**

- [ ] Competitive Selection (Roster)
- [X] Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desk Review/Interview)
- [ ] Single Sourcing (exceptional, only in emergency situations, approval by Head of Office required)

**Request for:**

- [ ] New SSA
- [ ] Extension/ Amendment

**Terms of payment**

- [X] Payment, upon completion of each deliverable according to schedule.
- [ ] Payment, upon completion of all deliverables at the end of assignment.
- [ ] Fee advance, percentage (up to 30% of total fee)

**Minimum Qualifications required:**

**Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:**

**Qualifications**
- A minimum of ten [10] years of relevant professional experience in programme evaluation in a development context and proven accomplishment in undertaking evaluations, including leading evaluations of multi-stakeholder programmes for multilateral organizations;
- Experience conducting Evaluability Assessments is highly desirable.

**Knowledge and skills**

- Knowledge of Evaluability Assessment of complex multi-sectoral programmes;
- Knowledge and expertise in results-based programming;
- Proven expertise in evaluating programmes which uses multi-sectorial approach focusing on education, health, nutrition or social protection;
- Extensive knowledge of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods;
- Excellent written and spoken English, report writing and presentation capacities;
- Excellent inter-personal skills and communication skills;
- Knowledge of the UN system and previous experience working with UN agencies would be a strong asset;
- Knowledge of the development context of Sierra Leone is desirable;

Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of a local language is an asset.