

| | | | |
|--|------------------|---|--|
| Title | | Duty Station: | |
| Qualitative research consultant, Child Marriage Interventions in Syria (Syria nationals only) | | Global Office of Research and Foresight (Italy) Home-based | |
| Start date: | End date: | | |
| 1 October 2023 | 1 April 2024 | | |
| Purpose of Activity/Assignment: | | | |
| The main purpose of the assignment is to support qualitative research in Syria as part of a research study investigating child marriage prevention and response interventions in humanitarian settings in the Middle East. Key areas of support will include collecting, managing and analysing qualitative data; and producing relevant reports and presentations for region and country-level dissemination. | | | |

Background

The UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office of Research and Foresight undertakes high-quality research that contributes to evidence-informed policymaking. Through the STAR (Strategic Technical Assistance for Research) Initiative to end harmful practices, the Child Rights and Protection team at Innocenti aims to strengthen the generation, synthesis, use and uptake of high-quality evidence on harmful practices to inform the work of UNICEF and UNFPA country and regional offices supported by the Global Programme to End Child Marriage and Joint Programme to Eliminate FGM.

The need for rigorous operational research to strengthen intervention design and implementation to address child marriage in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is particularly acute. The MENA region accounts for 45 million women and girls married in childhood. Around 1 in 5 young women were married before 18, and 1 in 25 before the age of 15. Child marriage in the region has been greatly exacerbated by conflict and displacement over the past decade. Despite the severity and extent of the issue, research on child marriage, particularly on interventions, has been notably limited.

While there is anecdotal evidence that child marriage is indeed being addressed in humanitarian contexts, no systematic assessment of the delivery of child marriage prevention and response programming has been undertaken to date. This has led to a lack of awareness about what is happening, where, and how and makes it challenging to design targeted strategies to address child marriage.

To respond, the Child and Adolescent Rights and Empowerment (CARE) Section is implementing a research study to strengthen programmatic responses to child marriage in the region. The aims of the overall study include; assessment of the landscape of interventions to address child marriage in humanitarian settings; examination of the factors perceived to facilitate or hinder the design, delivery and impact of select interventions; and the production of contextualised guidance to strengthen child marriage prevention and response programming in humanitarian

settings at the regional and country-level. The overall study will focus its examination of child marriage interventions in five countries in Middle East: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen. The methodology adopted for this study is adapted from Intervention Mapping (IM), a systematic intervention planning approach designed to guide the design of evidence-based, multi-level interventions grounded in theory and scientific evidence. This study focuses on the foundational step 1 of this approach i.e. a comprehensive situational analysis investigating what is being done programmatically to address child marriage in humanitarian settings in select countries; identify implementation strengths and challenges of select interventions; and the production of contextualised guidance to strengthen the design, delivery and impact of child marriage interventions in each country.

This Terms of Reference seeks a consultant to conduct in-country qualitative research in Syria, through key informant interviews and focus group discussions; transcribing of data, and data analysis. Additionally, the consultant will support the writing of the report and the production of relevant evidence products (briefs, toolkits/guidance, presentations, and other written materials).

Objectives of the consultancy

The primary objective of this consultancy is to support the study team in the design and execution of qualitative research focused on Syria, as part of a regional study investigating child marriage interventions in the Middle East. The main purpose of the assignment is to support qualitative research in Syria as part of a research study investigating child marriage prevention and response interventions in humanitarian settings in the Middle East. Key areas of support will include collecting, managing and analysing qualitative data; and producing relevant reports and presentations for region and country-level dissemination.

The consultant is required to:

- Review and contribute to an existing mapping and desk review of child marriage interventions in the region with a focus on Syria
- Review and contribute to qualitative data collection instruments, adapting for local context and stakeholder/informant type and conduct pilot test
- Identify key informants, secure buy-in and liaise with them appropriately about time and place for interview in collaboration with the study coordinator
- Conduct in-country key informant interviews and focus groups with programme staff, transcribe verbatim and translate, as required
- Analyse qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions.
- Produce country-level recommendations to achieve strengthened child marriage programming in collaboration with key stakeholders
- Engage with country and regional office counterparts through the implementation of the research, in addition to country-level stakeholders, such as ministries of education, health, and/or social development and draft briefing notes and presentations.
- In collaboration with the study team, consolidate the research into a regional level report and synthesis with country chapters

List of deliverables/outputs

| | Timeline |
|--|---|
| Deliverable 1. Review existing mapping of interventions and literature review and provide feedback and contributions with a focus on Syria (including information on humanitarian context in Syria; child marriage prevalence, trends, drivers and consequences; and interventions) | Early October |
| Deliverable 2. Contribute to preparation for data collection mission including drafting, translating and finalising the following research outputs, adapted to country context: research study protocol, consent forms, interview guides by stakeholder type; and field testing for implementation. | Mid-October (October 18 th) |
| Deliverable 3. Data collection mission in Syria completed, submission of anonymized de-identified audio files for specified country | Mid-December |
| Deliverable 4. Submission of clean, transcribed, translated datasets | Early-January |
| Deliverable 5. Codebook for qualitative data analysis submitted and qualitative data analysis conducted, with NVivo/Excel codebook files shared for specified country | Mid-January |
| Deliverable 6. Draft country chapter with Syria-specific findings and country-level recommendations (with contributions to overall report and incorporation of stakeholder feedback) | End of January |
| Deliverable 7. Prepare presentation slides on Syria data collection mission and results for remote regional workshop meeting, and produce second draft of country chapter and country-level recommendations | End of February |
| Deliverable 8. Final draft of country chapter on Syria submitted and recommendations/guidance for programming | End of March |

Total number of days: 108

Supervision

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of Ramya Subrahmanian, Chief, Child and Adolescent Rights and Empowerment (CARE).

Methodologies and Tools

- Methodologies to be used: research design, qualitative data collection and analysis, internet search
- Software to be used for data analysis: Microsoft excel, Qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo, or ATLAS, to be determined.

Conditions of Consultancy

- UNICEF Innocenti does not issue computer equipment to consultants. The consultant will be responsible for providing the necessary computer equipment for the consultancy themselves and should include the cost implications of this responsibility in their bid for the consultancy. The cost of software and subscriptions that may be necessary to complete the consultancy (e.g., Microsoft Word) also needs to be factored into the bid for the consultancy.
- This consultancy *will* require the consultant to travel in order to complete the required deliverables effectively and efficiently. The full cost of travel should be included into the bid for the contract. While UNICEF Innocenti does not make travel arrangements for consultants, there are value for money rules that apply to consultant travel. The consultant will arrange their own travel, clear the anticipated cost with UNICEF and invoice UNICEF for the travel cost as soon as the travel has been completed.
- UNICEF Innocenti will assist consultants with arrangements for visas, work permits, vaccinations, etc.
- UNICEF does not regard Individuals engaged under a consultancy contract as “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures. Consultants are therefore not entitled to benefits such as leave, pension 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.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed 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. Prospective consultants are encouraged to ensure that they fully understand (a) the requirements of each deliverable and (b) the workload associated with reaching a deliverable.

UNICEF Innocenti recognises that, due to the locations of some of its research, events may occur that either delay deliverables or prevent them from being completed. These events need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine the impact on the payment schedule of the contract. It is UNICEF

Innocenti's objective to be fair to consultants in situations where deliverables are delayed or no longer attainable through no wrongdoing of the consultant.

Consultants 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.

Minimum Qualifications required: Bachelors Masters x PhD Other

Enter Disciplines: International development, public health, social science, or a related field

Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:

Essential skills:

- Masters in social sciences – in social work, public health, gender, human rights, or a related field – with 3- 5 years of experience in conducting qualitative research, including fieldwork and qualitative data collection (conducting key informant interviews, focus group discussions)

OR

Bachelor degree with at least 7 years of relevant work experience may be accepted in lieu of an advanced university degree.

- Demonstrated research/programmatic experience in the development sector in Syria and within the MENA region
- Experience in the transcription of interviews
- Experience in qualitative data analysis
- Ability to organize own work and carry out a research project with limited supervision
- Proficiency in English and Arabic (spoken and written) is required
- Excellent writing and research communication skills
 - Ability to meet tight deadlines and to work closely with a global team

Desirable qualifications:

- Strong knowledge and familiarity with the Syria and/or MENA humanitarian context, particularly adolescent girls' programming, GBV prevention, child marriage and FGM prevention and response.

Core Values

- Care
- Respect
- Integrity
- Trust
- Accountability

- Sustainability

Competencies

- Builds and maintains partnerships
- Demonstrates self-awareness and ethical awareness
- Drive to achieve results for impact
- Innovates and embraces change
- Manages ambiguity and complexity
- Thinks and acts strategically
- Works collaboratively with others

Applicant must be a Syria national.

| | Timeline |
|--|---|
| Deliverable 1. Review existing mapping of interventions and literature review and provide feedback and contributions with a focus on Syria (including information on humanitarian context in Syria; child marriage prevalence, trends, drivers and consequences; and interventions) | Early October |
| Deliverable 2. Contribute to preparation for data collection mission including drafting, translating and finalising the following research outputs, adapted to country context: research study protocol, consent forms, interview guides by stakeholder type; and field testing for implementation. | Mid-October (October 18 th) |
| Deliverable 3. Data collection mission in Syria completed, submission of anonymized de-identified audio files for specified country | Mid-December |
| Deliverable 4. Submission of clean, transcribed, translated datasets | Early-January |

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Deliverable 5. Codebook for qualitative data analysis submitted and qualitative data analysis conducted, with NVivo/Excel codebook files shared for specified country | Mid-January |
| Deliverable 6. Draft country chapter with Syria-specific findings and country-level recommendations (with contributions to overall report and incorporation of stakeholder feedback) | End of January |
| Deliverable 7. Prepare presentation slides on Syria data collection mission and results for remote regional workshop meeting, and produce second draft of country chapter and country-level recommendations | End of February |
| Deliverable 8. Final draft of country chapter on Syria submitted and recommendations/guidance for programming | End of March |

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed 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

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.