

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Pre-Qualified Consultants' Roster of Experts on Youth Livelihoods & Economic Opportunities (Global)

Background

Youth livelihoods are a core pillar of UNICEF's efforts to address multidimensional child poverty, vulnerability, and exclusion, and to advance sustainable, equitable development outcomes for children, adolescents, and their families. Strengthened youth livelihoods contribute directly to household income security, resilience to shocks, human capital accumulation, and intergenerational mobility, and are essential to the achievement of UNICEF's Strategic Plan.

Across development, humanitarian, and fragile contexts, UNICEF country, regional, centres of excellence and headquarter offices will increasingly require rapid, high-quality, and flexible access to specialized youth livelihoods expertise to support policy dialogue, programme design and scale-up, financing strategies, partnerships, and integrated sectoral programming.

In line with UNICEF's procurement and human resources frameworks, UNICEF is therefore establishing a **Global Youth Livelihoods Roster of Experts for Individual Consultants**. The Roster of Experts will enable the pre-qualification of individual experts who can be efficiently mobilized, through simplified contracting processes, to respond to time-sensitive and strategic technical assistance needs across the organization.

Purpose of the Roster

The purpose of the Global Roster of Youth Livelihoods Experts is to:

- Establish a pre-qualified pool of individual consultants with demonstrated technical, policy, and operational expertise in youth livelihoods and economic inclusion.
- Enable rapid contracting and deployment of expertise in line with UNICEF HR policies to support country-level efforts to accelerate youth livelihoods and economic opportunities.
- Enhance the quality, coherence, scalability, and integration of UNICEF-supported livelihoods interventions.
- Strengthen UNICEF's ability to engage credibly in policy dialogue, financing discussions, and partnerships related to youth livelihoods and employment.
- Support cross-sectoral and systems-based approaches that maximize outcomes for children and adolescents.

Scope of Work

The roster will serve as a stand-by consultants' repository from which the respective UNICEF offices can draw upon to meet their programmatic requirements. Pre-qualified consultants may be contracted by UNICEF offices worldwide for time-bound assignments through specific Terms of Reference. Engagements may be short-term or longer-term, home-based, field-based, or hybrid, depending on programme needs and funding availability.

Assignments may include advisory services, analytical work, programme design and review, capacity development, facilitation, and technical accompaniment.

The roster is structured around six complementary technical streams, allowing UNICEF offices to identify and engage experts based on specific needs:

1. Youth Livelihoods Policy and Systems
2. Youth Livelihoods Financing and Public Finance
3. Youth Livelihoods Programmatic Design, Implementation and Learning
4. Youth Livelihoods Partnerships and Resource Mobilization
5. Youth Livelihoods Integration and Cross-Sectoral Programming
6. Youth Livelihoods Evaluation, Research, and Thought Leadership

Technical Streams and Areas of Expertise

1. Youth Livelihoods Policy and Systems

Experts under this stream may support:

- Development, review, and operationalization of national and subnational youth livelihoods, employment, entrepreneurship, and economic inclusion policies and strategies.
- Integration of livelihoods within social protection systems, including adaptive, shock-responsive, and pathways towards income generation and self-sufficiency.
- Policy analysis related to labour markets, informality, youth employment, women's economic empowerment, and inclusion of people with disabilities, including situation analysis, labour market diagnostics, and skills gap assessments.
- Institutional mapping, governance analysis, and systems strengthening for youth livelihoods (encompassing employment and entrepreneurship).
- Alignment of livelihoods policies with national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, and international commitments.
- Development of public-private-youth ecosystems or platforms that facilitate end-to-end pathways for youth to transition from learning through to livelihoods.

2. Youth Livelihoods Financing and Public Finance

Experts under this stream may support:

- Public expenditure analysis and budget reviews related to youth livelihoods – employment entrepreneurship, and economic inclusion.
- Fiscal policy dialogue and advisory support linked to youth livelihoods investments.
- Costing, financing strategies, and investment cases for youth livelihoods programmes.
- Innovative, blended, and results-based financing approaches.
- Strengthening linkages between youth livelihoods programming and Public Finance for Children (PF4C) agendas.

3. Youth Livelihoods Programmatic Design, Implementation and Learning

Experts under this stream may support:

- Design, piloting, and scale-up of youth (and women) livelihoods programmes, including cash-plus, graduation, skills development, entrepreneurship, and employment promotion.
- Operational support in development, humanitarian, and fragile contexts, including nexus programming.
- Market systems development and value chain approaches relevant to youth and vulnerable households.
- Development of employer-led skilling, hiring, and job placement models and /or sector-specific workforce development (e.g. AI-digital, green, care economy) targeting youth
- Monitoring and learning, including theory of change development, results frameworks, field monitoring systems, data dashboards, impact reporting, and adaptive learning.
- Integration of innovation, digital solutions, and data systems in youth livelihoods programming.

4. Youth Livelihoods Partnerships and Resource Mobilization

Experts under this stream may support:

- Strategic partnerships with governments, UN agencies, international financial institutions, NGOs, civil society, academia, think-tanks, and the private sector.
- Engagement with employers, financial institutions, incubators, and market actors to promote youth employment and income-generating opportunities.
- Partnerships with youth leaders and youth-led organizations, and design of partnership models with the public and private sectors that integrate youth as equal partners to advance livelihood opportunities
- Development of concept notes, funding proposals, and investment pitches.
- Donor mapping and engagement aligned with youth livelihoods and employment priorities.
- South–South and triangular cooperation initiatives.

5. Youth Livelihoods Integration and Cross-Sectoral Programming

Experts may be engaged to strengthen integration between livelihoods and:

- Social Protection, including economic inclusion and pathways to self-reliance.
- Education, including skills development and school-to-work transitions.
- Adolescent Development and Participation, including employability and entrepreneurship.
- Health and Nutrition, including links to food security and household resilience, as well as job creation and placement (e.g. community health workers, care economy).
- Child protection, including prevention of child labour, safe transitions to decent work, and prevention of exploitation and harmful practices, including child marriage.
- Gender equality, women’s economic empowerment, and disability inclusion.
- Humanitarian action, early recovery, and resilience-building.
- Climate change adaptation, green jobs, and climate-smart livelihoods.
- Child care and linkages to women’s economic inclusion.

6. Youth Livelihoods Evaluation, Research, and Thought Leadership

Experts under this stream may support:

- Designing and executing evaluations of youth livelihoods programmes executed by UNICEF and/or partners, including thematic, formative or summative impact evaluations.
- Developing innovative research products and thought leadership resources that position UNICEF at the cutting edge of knowledge in the youth livelihoods space.
- Supporting applied implementation research, learning agendas, and real-time adaptive learning approaches that support programme iteration.
- Convening global experts in the youth livelihoods space to address global research priorities and evidence gaps further establish UNICEF as a key actor in the youth livelihoods space.

Applicants are requested to self-identify their field(s), priority areas of expertise (they are numbered in the TORs so candidate should specify which sub-area applies), and tier(s) of expertise, along with their language proficiencies.

Tier(s) Classification based on years of experience

- **Tier 1:** Minimum 15 years of relevant professional experience for tier one experts.
- **Tier 2:** Minimum 8 years of relevant professional experience for tier two experts.
- **Tier 3:** Minimum 5 years of relevant professional experience for tier three experts.

Required Qualifications and Experience

Consultants applying for inclusion in the roster should meet the following minimum requirements:

- Advanced university degree (Master's or higher) in economics, public policy, development studies, social sciences, business, or a related field.
- A minimum of **5 years** of progressively responsible professional experience in youth employability, livelihoods, employment, entrepreneurship, economic inclusion, or related fields.
- Demonstrated experience working with governments, UN agencies, international organizations, NGOs, or development partners.
- Proven analytical, drafting, and communication skills in English; knowledge of additional UN languages is an asset.
- Experience working in low- and middle-income countries; experience in fragile or humanitarian contexts is an advantage.

Core Competencies

Roster consultants are expected to demonstrate:

- Technical excellence and subject-matter depth in livelihoods and economic inclusion.
- Strategic and systems-oriented thinking.
- Ability to deliver results independently and under tight timelines.
- Strong stakeholder engagement, facilitation, and communication skills.
- Commitment to UNICEF's values, ethics, and safeguarding standards.

Application Requirements

To complete the application, applicants must submit the following documents:

- A curriculum vitae highlighting relevant experience.
- A completed **Self-Assessment Form (Annex 1)** indicating relevant thematic areas of expertise (from the six areas listed above).
- The names and contact details of three professional references.
- A proposed daily rate.

Evaluation of Applicants

Only applicants who submit a complete application and meet the minimum eligibility requirements will be considered for further evaluation. Reference checks and academic credential verification will be conducted for shortlisted candidates as part of the selection process.

Applicants accepted onto the roster will be eligible for direct recruitment by UNICEF offices for short-term consultancy assignments over a period of three years. When a need arises, UNICEF offices will contact suitable roster consultants with a **specific Terms of Reference** outlining the scope and duration of the assignment and will confirm interest, availability, and the applicable fee.

Applications will be evaluated based on technical expertise, relevant experience, and overall suitability for inclusion in the roster, in line with UNICEF HR policies.

Technical Criteria

- Level and relevance of education to the selected thematic area (max. 15 points).
- Relevance of professional experience in the selected thematic area (max. 40 points).
- Record of youth livelihoods engagement and support and other high-quality products (max. 30 points).
- Experience working with UNICEF, other international organizations and national partners (max. 15 points).

Entry into the consultant roster system does not mean that a contract with UNICEF is guaranteed, contracting and agreed fee rate will be negotiated with requesting office and dependent upon forthcoming needs. Where a request for services arises, UNICEF offices will approach the selected consultants from the roster with a specific Terms of Reference outlining the specific assignment scope and duration, and negotiate with roster consultants on their interest, availability and daily fee.