

## Terms of Reference

### TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT (364 days)

#### Evaluation and Research Specialist

<b>Title &amp; Level</b>	Evaluation and Research Specialist, P4
<b>Location</b>	Freetown – Sierra Leone
<b>Duration</b>	364 days
<b>Start Date</b>	15 May 2021
<b>Reporting to</b>	Chief Evidence, Policy and Social Protection
<b>Budget Code/PBA No</b>	<b>3900/A0/08/885/001/010</b>
<b>Project and activity codes</b>	

#### I. BACKGROUND

The fundamental mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything the organization does — in programmes, in advocacy and in operations. To the degree that any child has an unequal chance in life — in its social, political, economic, civic and cultural dimensions — her or his rights are violated. UNICEF and cooperating partners and stakeholders work to secure the rights of each child and the surrounding families, communities and nations.

Working through the country program of cooperation, and likewise through the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF), UNICEF assists countries to realize the rights of all children. This involves strategies and programs ranging from innovative and experimental to those at scale. The effectiveness and impact of the strategies and programs must be determined. Evaluation is a critical function for understanding if development objectives have been met in a way that contributes to the progressive realization of children’s rights. To this end, evaluations assist program managers to make necessary adjustments or to confirm that the program can continue to advance to scale. Evaluations have an accountability objective, to assure partners that resources guided through UNICEF are used effectively and efficiently, and that there is a willingness to change when results can be improved. Furthermore, evaluation, together with other sources of evidence contributes to country, organizational and global learning. Evaluation also supports civic empowerment and behavioral change goals when it is implemented in a participatory way that allows stakeholders and rights holders to acquire the skills to assess development initiatives and to hold duty bearers to account.

#### II. PURPOSE OF THE TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT (TA)

The Sierra Leone Country Office is seeking to strengthen its capacity to undertake timely programme

evaluations and fulfil its commitments in line with the Global Evaluation Policy. The Country Office is therefore seeking an Evaluation & Research Specialist to manage the implementation of activities under the 2021-2022 evaluation plan and manage the review of the Country Office Costed Evaluation Plan as part of the Country Programme Mid-Term Review process. The Specialist will moreover take responsibility for developing and implementing a plan for national evaluation capacity development.

**Job organizational context:**

The Evaluation & Research Specialist reports to the Chief of Evidence, Policy and Social Protection for general guidance and direction and provides technical and operational support to the Country Management Team (CMT). The Evaluation & Research Specialist ensures credibility, impartiality, and independence of the evaluation function in the CO.

The incumbent works in accordance with the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the UNICEF evaluation policy. She/he provides guidance to staff involved in managing evaluations in the countries under his/her responsibility and consults the supervisor when major policy decisions and actions must be undertaken.

**Purpose for the job:**

The Evaluation & Research Specialist will be responsible for facilitating the overall planning, design, monitoring, updating and implementation of the country office Costed Evaluation Plan (CEP) - and associated annual evaluation plans - and is responsible for managing and monitoring the implementation of CEP efforts within the country office. Particularly the Specialist will be responsible for implementation of the activities outlined in the 2021-22 evaluation plan, including the Country Programme Evaluation. The Specialist will manage the review of the Costed Evaluation Plan as part of the Country Programme Mid-Term Review Process in 2021.

In addition to the Country Programme Evaluation, she/he will undertake thematic evaluations, evaluation of humanitarian action evaluability assessments, and other evaluative activities for which the Country Office is accountable. She/he will be responsible for engaging competent evaluators who conduct their work in accordance with the norms and standards of the UNICEF evaluation policy.

The Evaluation & Research Specialist will take responsibility for strengthening national evaluation capacity with a particular focus on young evaluators, including both government, academia and other stakeholders, and will develop a costed plan for the national evaluation capacity development activities under the Country Programme. The incumbent will also take responsibility for implementing the activities under this plan.

Furthermore, the Specialist will take on responsibility for strengthening the research function in the Country Office, including developing SOPs for evidence generation, providing technical input and guidance to Country Office researches and studies and undertaking capacity strengthening activities.

The Specialist is responsible for contributing to the design and effective conduct and uptake of evaluations in accordance with the UNICEF evaluation policy. He/she ensures that the UNEG Norms

and Standards for evaluation as well as UNICEF evaluation coverage benchmarks and quality standards are upheld.

**Note: Scope of Work covered:** The term 'evaluation' in this JD refers to the entire range of evaluation products listed in Table 2 of the [UNICEF Evaluation Policy](#).

### III. SUMMARY OF KEY FUNCTIONS/ACCOUNTABILITIES

**Summary of key functions/accountabilities:**

1. Evaluation Leadership
2. Evaluation Conduct and Use
3. Evaluation Capacity Strengthening and Partnership Building
4. Research Management

#### 1. Evaluation Leadership

*In collaboration with the CMT and national partners, take the lead to develop and implement a plan of evaluation activities that will provide relevant and strategic information to manage the Country Programme and relevant national policies and programmes toward achieving results for children in both humanitarian and non-humanitarian situations.*

- Guide the Country Office and partners to identify priority evaluation topics in accordance with the UNICEF Evaluation Policy, the UNICEF Strategic Plan, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Country Programme Document and national policies and programmes.
- Identify the Evaluation objectives, priorities, and activities required for effective Country Office and partner Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans. In humanitarian response situations, adjust the prevailing evaluation plan in UNICEF Evidence Information System Integration system (EISI), in accordance with guidance for emergency situations. Likewise, adjust the evaluation plans in EISI in accordance with the transition through the stages of transition and recovery.
- Identify gaps in knowledge and work with sector managers to ensure these are addressed. Facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration in the execution of these efforts.
- Provide technical support to ensure that a set of evaluation performance indicators is monitored and fed into decision-making processes in the context of the multi-year and annual evaluation plans in EISI, as well as associated office-wide management plans and work plans, ensuring close follow up on the implementation of planned evaluative activities .
- Consolidate evaluation plans within required systems and documentation, including the EISI planning platform and in the Costed Evaluation Plan that accompanies the Country Programme Document for consideration by the Executive Board. Ensure that evaluation findings and lessons learned are incorporated in country programme, Programme Strategy Notes and other planning, and reporting documents. Support the conceptualization of MTRs from an evaluation perspective.
- Monitor progress and support Country Management Team (CMT), Country Office Annual Reports and, where applicable, Mid-term Reviews (MTR), as well as other review moments that lead to plan revisions. Provide input to management reports, including relevant sections of the Country Office Annual Report.

## **2. Evaluation Conduct and Use**

***Ensure that UNICEF-supported evaluations are designed and implemented to established UN quality standards, and the results are disseminated in a timely fashion and used by stakeholders in order to improve programme performance and contribute to wider learning.***

- Undertake an evaluability assessment of themes listed in the Costed Evaluation Plan, as required, and make recommendations on changes to improve the evaluability of the programmes.
- Formulate Terms of Reference and evaluation designs of high quality.
- Manage the recruitment of appropriate and highly qualified consultants. The Specialist will closely monitor the implementation of the evaluation, quality review the deliverables and will indicate when the quality is high enough that it can be accepted. As part of this role, she/he will help establish and manage the necessary governance bodies (Steering Committee; Reference Group) for their inputs into the quality assurance process.
- Work closely with external evaluation consultants/teams to enable them to deliver results according to the agreed Terms of Reference. Exercise sufficient oversight that quality is assured, and any quality problems are detected soon enough that timely remedial action is possible.
- Develop and implement a multi-method communication plan to disseminate the evaluation report to intended audiences via user-friendly methods. Foster organizational accountability and learning based on the outcomes of the evaluations. Promotes further dissemination and use of evaluation to internal and external audiences, including national government, development partners, CSOs and private sector partners.
- Support stakeholders to prepare a formal management response that reflects their reaction/views on the evaluation recommendations. The Specialist will monitor and report on the implementation of agreed management response actions. At a larger scale, find means to engage partners around the value of the evaluation, with a consistent goal of increasing utilization and reach.
- Support country-led evaluations of policies and programmes and the consideration of the results by partners.

## **3. Evaluation Capacity Strengthening and Partnership building**

***Ensure that evaluation capacities of Country Office staff and national partners – including government and civil society – are strengthened, enabling them to increasingly engage in and lead evidence generating processes. Ensure that the Country Office is effectively linked to wider UNICEF capacity building developments in a way that both contributes to and benefits from organizational learning.***

- Build and strengthen strategic partnerships through networking and advocacy with local/national governments and sub-regional governmental bodies, UN system agency partners, donors, NGOs, funding organization, research institutes, including universities, and the private sector. Promotes joint Govt/UNICEF evaluations that rigorously assess national policies, programmes and innovative models.
- Ensure that sufficient systems and procedures are in place within the CO for appropriate ethics reviews of evidence activities as per the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation and Data Collection and Analysis.
- Foster policy-level and academic partnerships to support national evaluation capacity development initiatives. Ensure that evaluation capacities of country office staff and national partners – government and civil society – are strengthened enabling relevant Government units to increasingly engage in and lead evaluation processes.

#### **4. Research Management**

***Ensure that UNICEF-supported research is designed and implemented according to established UNICEF policies and procedures, and the results are disseminated in a timely fashion to stakeholders in order to improve programme performance and contribute to wider learning.***

- Establish and facilitate research quality assurance processes at the CO level in accordance with the UNICEF Policy on Research. Ensure that CO Standard Operating Procedures for Evidence Generation outline the quality assurance process for research and that checklists, guidance and other tools are available to research project managers from all sectors.
- Convene the CO internal Research and Evidence Generation Steering Committee.
- Technically support UNICEF programme specialists and programme partners to formulate Terms of Reference for high quality research projects.
- Review the Terms of Reference for upcoming research projects as well as drafts research reports.
- Assist with the peer review process of major research projects and coordinate feedback to Supervisor/CMT/stakeholders to ensure quality and compliance with the UNICEF Policy on Research and country office research priorities.
- Assist with the recruitment and selection of appropriately qualified research consultants, ensuring that the selection process is in compliance with UNICEF standards for performance, accountability, transparency and ethics.
- Assist research project managers from all sectors with the development of a multi-method communication plan to disseminate research findings to intended audiences via user-friendly methods.
- Ensure all research follows the ethical principles and standards outlined in the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation and Data Collection and Analysis.

## **IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE**

### **Education**

An Advanced University Degree in the social sciences, economics, public policy, statistics, or in research methods is required. A degree or certification/accreditation in Evaluation is a significant advantage.

### **Experience**

- A minimum of 8 years of professional experience in the implementation of equity-focused evaluations and the management of the evaluation function at national and international level. Experience in development and/ or humanitarian settings is required.
- Experience in supporting national evaluation capacity and working with professional evaluation associations;
- Experience in evaluation design and in conducting evaluations as per UNICEF and UNEG norms and standards for Evaluation in the UN System;

- Familiarity with methods used in conducting both ‘up-stream’ evaluations (e.g. focusing on policies, strategies and systems), as well as ‘down-stream’ evaluations (e.g. focusing on delivery of programmes and projects) is an asset.
- Experience in related evidence functions is an asset, including Social Policy, Public Policy, Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis, Research, Programme Audit, and Programme Planning and Monitoring. Experience in these areas cannot be substituted for the Evaluation experience but is an advantage.

### **Language requirements**

Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of another official UN language or a prominent language of the duty station is an asset

### **Technical Knowledge**

- Professional expertise in evaluation process management, dissemination of results, and utilization.
- Technical knowledge of methodologies employed in Evaluation, including Results-based Management (RBM), theories of change, stakeholders mapping, standards and models, research designs, quantitative/qualitative/mixed methods of data collection, validity/reliability testing of data, data and qualitative information analysis and interpretation, and statistical inference methods.
- Technical knowledge in routine monitoring systems; preferably those associated with Health, Nutrition, Education, Child Protection, Social Policy or WASH sectors
- Technical knowledge on utilization of evaluation and other evidence approaches to realize Gender Equality and Human Rights based development.
- Familiarity with evidence generation ethics review processes.
- Exposure to mobile technology platforms, ‘big data’ and other innovative techniques
- Use of data and information quantitative and qualitative software for data analysis is an asset
- Knowledge of UNICEF & UNEG Evaluation norms & standards
- Communication skills (oral, written and in developing effective and user-targeted materials).
- Publications which show sound experience with evaluation methods are an advantage.

## **V. COMPETENCIES OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE**

### **Core Values**

- Care
- Respect
- Integrity
- Trust
- Accountability

### **Core Competencies**

- Nurtures, Leads and Manages People (2)
- Demonstrates Self Awareness and Ethical Awareness (3)
- Works Collaboratively with others (3)
- Builds and Maintains Partnerships (3)
- Innovates and Embraces Change (3)
- Thinks and Acts Strategically (3)
- Drives to achieve impactful results (3)
- Manages ambiguity and complexity (3)

### **Functional Competencies**

- Analyzing (3)
- Deciding and Initiating action (2)
- Applying technical expertise (3)
- Planning and organizing (3)
- Persuading and Influencing (2)

Prepared by:

Name and Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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