**Terms of Reference**

GUYANA and SURINAME COUNTRY OFFICE

**Evaluation of the Guyana Nursery Education Programme 2006 – 2016**

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| Individual contract details:  |
| Duration: | Three Months (60 Working days) |
| Location: | Guyana |
| Supervisor: | Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist |

**Background**

On September 13, 1976, the Government of Guyana introduced an early stimulation programme for children ages three years nine months to five years nine months. This programme, known as the Guyana Nursery Education Programme, (GNEP), offered nationally and free across difficult terrain and multi-cultural domains, is a trail blazer in the Caribbean. Children spend two years in a programme, which the Ministry states, is designed to effect the development of their socialization and their intellectual and psychomotor skills through curriculum activities which are based mostly on child development rather than subject matter discipline. The programme is delivered in discrete nursery schools and in primary schools with nursery classes. Thirty eight years after its implementation – in September 2014 - the GNEP changed the age requirement to allow enrolment of children who became 3 years by June 30 of the year of entry

The day’s activities span four hours with play and multi- sensory approaches being the pillars upon which the physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of young children is nurtured. Active learning through play facilitated by variety of materials for skills development, experimentation, discovery and learning and a good mix of rest and quiet activity create opportunity to make social contacts in small and large groups; to share, cooperate and develop initiative and leadership skills. This strategy also provides the foundation for the appreciation of aesthetics and cultural experiences. Active parent and community involvement are encouraged.

Beginning in 1976 with one hundred and ninety (190) schools and a national enrolment of over nineteen thousand children (19,000), the GNEP, still not a compulsory programme, has grown with records in 2012-2013 showing a national enrolment, in public schools, of over twenty-five thousand children (25,968) in three hundred and sixty-three (363) discrete schools and one hundred and twenty-six (126) nursery classes. This translates into a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 89.9% excluding private schools. The Ministry’s is currently not capturing all the data from private schools but data which has been collected gives an enrolment of 1382 pupils. The national average attendance in public schools is 77% (74% boys and 79% girls) with a range of between 66% and 80% average attendance across Regional Education Departments. The proportion of trained teachers nationally is 69%.

The GNEP is bolstered by a tier system of standardized training beginning with on the job training through monthly capacity building; structured pre and in service teacher training leading to Associate Degrees through to post graduate certification. Specialized leadership, management and monitoring trainings in early childhood are also offered.

Over the decades, the GNEP made adjustments to various components namely programme structure/learning sessions; training strategies; monitoring techniques; age requirements to the nursery school programme; early learning standards; diagnostic and other assessments. Some of these were evidenced based while others, initiated as experiments became national without robust impact investigations.

With Nursery Education in Guyana taking responsibility for the child’s learning and development from the age of 3 years 6 months and leading the way in structured programming for this age cohort, it is incumbent on the Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Education to provide the children in their charge with equal opportunities to play and learn in quality learning spaces for reaching their optimum potential. After forty years of its implementation, this evaluation is critical to ensuring that the goals, strategies for nursery education in Guyana are consistent with global frameworks; meet the equity agenda; respond to new research findings while maintaining its cultural appropriateness. This findings of the evaluation will inform an analytical review of key achievements, good practices, gaps and constraints that need to be addressed, towards the overall improvement of the nursery education program in Guyana.

**The Purpose of the Evaluation**

This exercise set out to evaluate the performance of the Guyana Nursery Education Programmed as regards to effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Cross cutting considerations will also be assessed. This evaluation is timely as the findings will inform a revision of the existing curriculum and provide strategies for a more effective implementation of nursery education in Guyana.

1. To determine the extent to which and how quality of the GNEP offered to children and their parents over the last 40 years have and are achieving their objectives.
2. Based on the findings with regards to number 1, identify sources, facilitating factors and challenges encountered in the GNEP
3. Drawing on findings in 1 and 2 compile lessons learned and elaborate their implications for the future of the GNEP.

**Scope and Focus/Objectives**

The evaluation will provide answers to the following questions:-

***Effectiveness***

* To what extent have the intended outcomes of the GNEP have been realized?
* Has GNEP led to better preparation for primary education?
* Are educators in nursery education provided with the right types of skills and competencies during their formal training?

***Relevance***

* To what extent does the nursery education programme contribute to the achievement of the SDGs?
* To what extent does the Nursery education programme focus on the development of the whole child (emotional, social, mental, physical and spiritual)?

***Efficiency***

* How cost effective is the current approach to manage and implement the nursery education programme?
* How can the cost/benefit in the Nursery education implementation be maximised?
* Have the nursery education standards and guidelines been implemented in a standardized way? If so, to what extent?
* What are the enabling factors for and or hindrances to the effective implementation of the GNEP
* Is the Nursery education delivered in a culturally appropriate manner?

***Impact*** *(Though not wholly an impact evaluation, the impact of the programme will also be assessed.)*

* To what extent has the GNEP been implemented according to more than 90% of the guidelines?
* To what extent has the GNEP helped children to be developmentally on track?
* To what extent has the GNEP led to a reduction in on time enrolment at primary school
* What is the impact of the GNEP on the knowledge, attitude and practices of the families?
* What is the impact of the GNEP on performance of children in primary schools?
* To what extent has the GNEP contributed to the reduction in children’s negative social behaviours

***Sustainability***

* To what extent are the GNEP implementation and management arrangements and funding sustainable?
* What recommendations and lessons learnt in the GNEP should be considered for the future?
* What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in GNEP and how have they been addressed?

***Cross cutting contributions***

* To what extent has the GNEP included issues of gender equity, abuse and disaster preparedness?

The materials listed below will be made available to the consultant and are expected to be reviewed and referenced, as relevant, in the inception and final reports.

* The goals and objectives of the nursery education programme
* The nursery education curriculum and learning schedules
* The teacher training curriculum for nursery education
* Documents which have given direction to change in policy; assessments etc.
* Available handbook on Nursery Education in Guyana
* All related statistics on nursery education - the statistical booklet
* Reports of initiates – government and donor supported - to enhance the local nursery education programme

**Evaluation process and methodology:**

The consultant will commence work on the 1st of July, 2017 and by the 30th of November, 2017 would have concluded and submitted the final report which would have incorporated the recommendations after review by MOE and UNICEF.

The consultant is expected to work closely with the key officials of Ministry of Education and UNICEF. This evaluation is qualitative and the consultant will design, conduct, and analyse participatory In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with duty bearers. Data will be collected from teachers, the communities and families of students, in Nursery education; Head teachers of Nursery schools Regional Education Officers, other key stakeholders of the Ministry of Education.

The evaluation will be conducted in three phases i.e. 1. the inception, 2. the data collection and 3. the data analysis and report writing phases. These phase will be implemented in the stated numerical order as the completion of phase 1 is crucial for the preparation and conduct of phase 2 and both for phase 3. Once these phases are conducted the implementation of the evaluation is expected to be complete.

**Phase 1: Desk review, interviews with key stakeholders, development of research instruments, and submission of inception report**

* **Conduct a desk review:** Review will include but not limited policy documents and all other relevant documents as listed above; reports from feedback workshops- Monitoring documents. Existing quantitative data will also be considered in the desk review.
* **Key stakeholder interviews:** Chief Education Officer (CEO); Assistant Chief Education Officer (ACEO) (Nursery), MOE Chief Planning Officer, UNICEF, World Bank, Project Heads; teachers, parents/guardians; Regional Education Officers and District Education Officers; ECD Field Officers
* **An Inception Report must be submitted.** The inception report will include an evaluation matrix i.e. a table showing how each evaluation question will be answered and how the information will be collected.
* Development of research instruments IDI, FGD, Classroom Observation checklist and other instruments
* Meetings with other national stakeholders

**Phase 2: Data collection**

The consultant is expected to work with an in-country team to conduct IDIs with key personnel of the MOE and UNICEF. S/he is also expected to;

* conduct IDI with Head teachers and other teachers
* conduct IDI and FGDs with Regional Education Officers, community members; …
* Classroom Observations ….
	+ Individual interviews with parents/caregivers
	+ Progress report to be submitted and presented on …, 2017
	+ Meet with Stakeholders

**Phase 3: Data Analysis, Sharing of findings and writing of report**

The consultant will be responsible for the data analysis, writing the report and presentation of findings to partners

* + - For the data analysis the grounded theory methodology will be used, involving verbatim transcription, coding of data, development of themes, comparison and contrasting of themes and recording of findings and theoretical propositions.
		- The safety of data during the data collection phase will be the total responsibility of the researcher; all information gathered for this evaluation is the property of MoE and UNICEF. No data collected and or reviewed for this evaluation or data to which the evaluator is privileged during time of the evaluation as direct or indirect result of being the evaluator for this evaluation, can be shared and or used by the evaluator neither can s/he approve the use of the whole or any part of it for personal or professional purposes without approval in writing from Ministry of Education and UNICEF combined.
		- The main findings will be presented by the consultant to National Stakeholders and sufficient time will be allocated for comments
		- The writing of the report should be done in constant communication with UNICEF and MoE.
		- The final report will be approved by UNICEF and MoE
		- Final report to be submitted by the 31st of August, 2017

**Ethical Consideration**

To ensure that the key ethical principles for the conduct of evaluation involving human subjects are followed, each potential respondent will be given full information about the evaluation including the purpose and potential benefits of the evaluation, their rights, and how the information collected will be used. They will also be informed that all data will be kept confidentially being only accessible by members of the assessment team. Verbal consent will be collected from all those who agree to participate. (The person receiving the consent and a witness will sign the consent form). All participants will be informed of their right to discontinue their participation at any point and approaches for ensuring confidentiality will be described.

**Stakeholder Participation**

National level stakeholders will be instrumental in the planning of the implementation of the evaluation to scale and the review of deliverables among other things. Stakeholders will be instrumental in the review of deliverables and providing critical feedback towards their finalisation. These stakeholders include:-

* Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries – Ministry of Public Health; Ministry of Social Protection; Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs; Ministry of Communities
* Cyril Potter College of Education and the University of Guyana
* UNICEF Other national / international partners
* Representation from the Parent Teachers Associations across country
* Regional and District Education Officers
* ECD Field Officers

**Qualifications and Experience**

This consultancy is for one consultant (Person/Firm) who must possess the following competencies:

* An Advanced University Degree in Social Sciences, Anthropology, Sociology, education. A specialization in early childhood/ nursery education will be an advantage
* A minimum of 8 years of professional experience in designing, implementing and supervising Monitoring and Evaluation programmes and particularly early childhood development and education
* Proven experience in leading and managing outcome and impact evaluations. Good understanding of evaluation methodologies and UNEG norms and standards for Evaluation.
* Clarity of understanding and conceptualization of early childhood / nursery education issues including the relationship to analysis of barriers and bottlenecks to educational participation,
* A good understanding of equity issues in education
* Proven analytical skills and experiences lending to the ability to identify and evaluate best practices and innovative approaches to be utilized by the project
* Excellent English writing skills
* Strong organizational, and presentation skills

Accountabilities

**UNICEF** will:

* Meet initially with the Consultant, the Chief Planning Officer of the MoE, , and other staff identified by the MOE
* Review inception report and provide feedback for adjustment
* Review data collection instruments prepared by consultant
* Attend briefing meetings
* Review draft report
* Review and approve final report before final payment is made to consultant

**The MOE** will:

* Initiate meeting with MOE Officials, UNICEF and other stakeholders
* Prepare and inform Regional Education Officers, Head teachers and parents outlying the purpose of the consultancy and the role they are expected to play.
* Provide the consultant with letters to be presented to key stakeholders including head teachers, parents and Regional Education Officers
* Provide the consultant with materials which will include various monitoring and other reports for as requested by the consultant.
* Review consultants inception report and data collection instruments

**The Consultant** will:

* The Lead researcher may use the services of an in-country researcher for fieldwork
* Meet initially with officials from the MOE and UNICEF to discuss the consultancy and timelines in detail.
* Will review all documents as provided by the ACEO Nursery
* Submit inception report which will include desk review, data collection instruments, evaluation matrix, workplan for the evaluation and the outline for the final report. Incorporate feedback from UNICEF and MOE and finalise inception report before proceeding for fieldwork.
* Conduct fieldwork and coordinate all activities including with the office of the Planning Unit and the Assistant Chief Education Officer, Nursery. Education (ACEON)
* Prepare draft periodic reports for discussion with UNICEF and MOE
* Discuss Preliminary findings with the Chief Planning Officer and the ACEON, key Ministry of Education Officials and Evaluation Steering Committee
* Prepare and submit comprehensive final report
* The consultant shall act in a manner within the laws of the country of Guyana.

NB: The MoE and UNICEF shall assume no liability for health and safety of consultant; nor will MoE and UNICEF assume responsibility for the loss or damage of equipment or transport vehicles or any injury done to a third party used in conjunction with this work.

Procedures and Logistics

* UNICEF will provide funds for all in country travel inclusive of DSA if necessary. The Learning and Development Officer and The Chief Planning Officer, will regularly monitor the progress of the consultant’s work. UNICEF’s Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist will be closely involved in providing quality assurance.
* Consultant will work from his/her private space
* Consultant will use his/her computer and other equipment if necessary
* Consultant will submit final report in an electronic format

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| **Deliverable** | **Main components** | **Days** | **% of Fee** |
| Inception Report  | * Clearly outlined work plan including timelines and strategies for each phase of the study including sampling methodology
* An evaluation matrix i.e. a table showing questions to be answered by the research and how the information will be collected to answer each question.
* Comprehensive document review report
* Interview schedule, data collection instruments i.e. FDG guides, IDI guides and classroom observation checklist along with the relevant consent and ascent forms.
* Outline of final report
 | 2 Week (by end-July) | 20 |
| **Draft Report** (in line with UNEG and UNICEF’s Global guidelines on reporting standards) | * Report based on the agreed outline in the inception report, using collected data transcription of interview, coded transcripts of data according to themes checklists and notes on observations and field visits

An Oral presentation of main findings to UNICEF and MOE on:* Key findings and recommendations
* Constraints, challenges and other critical factors of research implementation
* Outline of the next steps
 | 8 weeks (by mid-Oct.) | 60 |
| Final Report (in line with UNEG and UNICEF’s Global guidelines on reporting standards) | * Final Report based on comments on the draft report, together with the Executive Summary no longer than three pages.
 | 2 weeks (by mid. Nov.) | 20 |

**Conditions**

* The contract will be temporary and will be between UNICEF and the Consultant.
* The consultant is expected to conduct all work independently with the exception of those cases where support may be needed to attend any high-level meetings.
* Prior to commencing the contract, the individual consultant will be required to sign a Health Statement for consultants/individual contractors, and to document that he/she has appropriate health insurance, if applicable.
* Consultant will adhere to UNEG norms and standards and UNICEF’s global guidelines on reporting standards.
* The consultant will be supervised by UNICEF’s Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. There will be joint monthly meetings Chief Planning Officer, the Chief Education Officer and the ACEON, and UNICEF technical team.

**Method of Payment**

* All fees will be paid in US dollars
* All local related travel will be reimbursed upon submission of receipts
* The fee will be paid in tranches as follows; all fees will be paid in US currency at the current bank rate.
* Upon acceptance of inception report 20% of the total sum will be paid
* Upon acceptance of draft report and oral presentation 50% of the total sum will be paid
* Upon approval and acceptance of final report 30% of the total sum will be paid

**Annex**

UNEG standards and guidelines for evaluations: Please see the link below

<https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/about-iom/evaluation/UNEG-Norms-Standards-for-Evaluation-2016.pdf>