

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS

Title	Funding Code	Type of engagement	Duty Station:
Consultant to review the IECD policy and the implementation guide	RR	Consultant – Deliverable based	Remote

Background and Purpose of the Assignment

Nigeria has an estimated population of 206 million, an estimated 44 percent of which is below the age of 15¹. With an average growth rate of 2.5 percent per annum², Nigeria is also one of the fastest-growing countries in the world, and its population is projected to reach 263 million in 2030, a 44 percent increase from 2015. According to current projections, by 2050, 1 of every 13 births globally will take place in Nigeria³. This presents, on one hand, a unique opportunity to leverage high growth rates to accelerate Nigeria’s development and, on the other, a significant challenge to ensure that adequate planning, sufficient resources, and quality social services are made available for the bulging child and youth population.

The first five years of a child’s life is a critical period for their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. The experiences during this period have a major impact on their future. Research has shown that a child’s newly developing brain is highly plastic and responsive to change as billions of integrated neural circuits are established through the interaction of genetics, environment, and experience. Optimal brain development requires a stimulating environment, adequate nutrients, and social interaction with attentive caregivers. Unsafe conditions, negative interactions, and lack of educational opportunities during these early years can lead to irreversible negative outcomes, which can affect a child’s potential for the remainder of his or her life.

The importance of Early Childhood Development (ECD) has been acknowledged by its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as an international priority for the 21st century. Global targets in education (SDG 4.2); health (SDG 3.2); nutrition (SDG 2.2); and protection (SDG 16.2) address key outcomes to realize the young children’s developmental potential. Early childhood care, development and education (ECCDE) is more than preparation for primary school. It aims at the holistic development of a child’s social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs in order to build a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing. ECCDE has been identified as one of the best investment options to build human capital, national economy and promote sustainable growth. Quality ECCDE yields a significant return on investment as the child transits to primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. These returns impact not only the child’s individual development but also that of their families, communities, country and the world.

Despite the importance of Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECCDE), participation in Nigeria remains low at just 30 per cent⁴, and even lower in the North-east and North-west, among rural households, the poorest families, and those of Hausa ethnicity. Moreover, children’s access to nurturing care and environments supportive of their development remain limited, as approximately one in three children are not engaging in activities with adults that foster early learning and school readiness, just 11

¹ Nigeria National Development Plan (2021-2025) Ministry of National Planning, Budget, and Finance

² World Bank. (2021). Population growth – Nigeria [Data set].

³ UNICEF. (2017). *Generation 2030 Africa 2.0. Prioritizing investments in children to reap the demographic dividend*. New York: UNICEF.

⁴ ECCDE net enrolment ratio according to Nigeria’s 2018 National Personnel Audit.

per cent and 28 per cent of children are engaged by their fathers and mothers, respectively, fewer than half of children under age 5 regularly play with two or more types of playthings, and just 6 per cent have three or more books at home⁵. In addition to limited government capacity for planning, financing and delivering ECE, low and inefficient education expenditure, and inadequate supply of qualified teachers, key barriers to children's early learning include low public demand for pre-primary education and a lack of awareness of the importance of both quality early education and engagement in play-based learning at home.

An integrated approach to Early Childhood Care and Development is expected to improve the care and support given to young children at the community level and thereby give every Nigerian child a good head start to life. It was on the basis of this that the National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria (IECD) was developed in 2007 with the guidelines for implementing the national policy developed in 2013. The two documents are to provide direction for the intersectoral provision of care, stimulation and early learning for the Nigerian children and also prepare them for lifelong learning.

Given that it is more than fifteen years since the IECD policy was developed, and more than a decade since the guidelines for the implementation of this policy was developed, FME through the support of UNICEF will undertake a comprehensive review of the progress against the actions and remaining gaps on the implementation of the IECD policy and its corresponding guidelines. This process of the development of an updated and inclusive IECD policy will be led by the Federal Ministry of Education with the participation of other national and state level actors for ownership, alignment, and harmonization by all relevant line ministries of the FME.

Scope of Work:

The overall scope of work of the consultancy will be to support the Federal Ministry of Education review and update the 2007 IECD policy and corresponding 2013 policy implementation guidelines.

Under the supervision of Education Specialist, the consultant will be responsible for the following over the course of the 6-months contract:

1. **Review the current IECD policy:** Conduct a desk review and a series of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)/ Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with the relevant stakeholders (including but not limited to the ECD Directors and desk officers at FME, State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEBs) and State Ministries of Education (SMoE), ECD desk officers and Directors from the various line ministries – Health, Women Affairs, Water resources, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to review and analyse the existing policy against the following research questions:
 - What actions are prioritized in the current policy and are these aligned with the most pressing needs and deprivations in the early childhood sub-sector in Nigeria?
 - To what extent are the prioritized actions:
 - aligned with national and international evidence of best practices for early learning and development (including principles such as the early identification of children with disabilities and early intervention, nurturing care, and other key frameworks and theories for early childhood education)?
 - inclusive and focused on reaching the most marginalized children in Nigeria (including specific population groups such as children with disabilities, children from the poorest families, children in conflict-affected communities and on the move, etc.)?
 - relevant to state and local contexts?

⁵ National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2017). Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2016-17, Survey Findings Report. Abuja, Nigeria: National Bureau of Statistics and United Nations Children's Fund.

- What innovative approaches are employed and to what extent are these appropriately aligned with the policy priorities and in support of their achievement?
 - To what extent does the current policy focus on the progressive realization of children's rights in early childhood (namely through the principle of progressive universalism)?
 - To what extent does the current policy address the responsibilities of key actors to ensure its implementation, and are effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and processes in place and operational to support this?
 - To what extent have the policy's objectives been realized and what are the key enablers of and barriers to this?
 - What are remaining gaps?
2. **Develop first draft of the revised National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development and implementation guidelines:** - The consultant will edit and revise the current policy to include key recommendations across content and approaches based directly on the review conducted, paying particular attention to cross-cutting issues including gender, inclusion and use of technology. The consultant will participate in consultations with the Steering committee, ECE national working group (NWG) and other relevant stakeholders across the geopolitical zones including but not limited to ECD stakeholders, parents and teachers, school leaders and community leaders; to agree beforehand on the structure of the policy document and to facilitate a review of the draft by the Steering committee to gather and document the feedback.
 3. **Develop a second and third draft of IECD policy and implementation guidelines** - Based on the feedback provided in the first draft, revise and develop a second and third draft of both the policy and the implementation guide. The consultant will be expected to present the drafts to all stakeholders for national level critique.
 4. **Final policy document, implementation guidelines and slide deck** - Based on the feedback received on third draft, finalize the documents for submission and share a well curated and formatted slide deck on the policy and the implementation guidelines. These will be finalized with endorsement from the steering committee and ECE NWG.
 5. **Validation** - The consultant will be expected to prepare to deliver a presentation and actively participate in a national workshop for the dissemination of the revised national policy document and implementation guideline.
 6. **Knowledge management:** The consultant will be expected to create an online shared folder of all documents reviewed, minutes of consultations, and the draft and final versions of all deliverables and share them with UNICEF.

Child Safeguarding

Is this project/assignment considered as "[Elevated Risk Role](#)" from a child safeguarding perspective?

YES NO If YES, check all that apply:

Direct contact role YES NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

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Child data role YES **NO**

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

Budget Year: 2023	Requesting Section/Issuing Office: <i>Education/Abuja</i>	Reasons why consultant cannot be done by staff: This position involves extensive technical engagement on the development and review of the IECD policy and technical guides, on a full-time basis, alongside regular coordination with multiple stakeholders (including UNICEF, the government and CSOs).	
Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: Yes No, please justify:			
Consultant sourcing: National International Both		Request for: New Individual Contract Extension/ Amendment	
Consultant selection method: Competitive Selection (Roster) Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desk Review/Interview)			
If Extension, Justification for extension:			
Supervisor:	Start Date: 8 April 2023	End Date: 30 November 2023	Number of Days (working) 51 days

Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline	Payment schedule
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1. An inception report (between 8 and 10 pages)	5 days	20%
2. Facilitate seven (7) Workshops and Meetings/consultations a. state/ six geopolitical zones b. National consultations and produce a comprehensive report from the national and zonal consultations – max 15 pages 3. Provide support to refine the developed policy assessment instruments	20 days	20%
4. Revision of first draft of the IECD policy and the implementation guide 5. Present first draft to the steering committee for review 6. Develop a second draft of IECD policy and implementation guidelines 7. Present to the steering committee for critique / validation 8. Third draft policy document and implementation guidelines - for national level critique	5 days 1 day 3 days 1 days 2 days	35%
9. Final review and produce final policy document and implementation guideline. Final document must be copy-edited and formatted 10. Slides deck prepared for use at the validation workshop and submission of any knowledge management products.	8 days	25%

Estimated deliverable fees			
1. An inception report submitted.			20%
2. National and zonal consultations completed			20%
3. Three drafts of policy and implementation guide developed and revised			35%
4. Final policy document and implementation guideline produced 5. Validation workshop held and knowledge management products finalized and submitted.			25%
Travel International (if applicable)			n/a
Travel Local (please include travel plan)			
DSA (if applicable)			

Total estimated consultancy costsⁱ			TBD
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<p>Minimum Qualifications required:</p> <p>Bachelors Masters PhD Other</p> <p>Enter Disciplines – Primary and/or Secondary Education/Pedagogy, Education Development, Education Policy, Social Policy, International Relations, or related field</p>	<p>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:</p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 10 years of experience in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Education research, evaluation and implementation and education policy. • Expert level technical knowledge about Early Childhood Development and Education, with demonstrated technical work experience on early learning provision, pedagogy, and curriculum. • Deep familiarity and understanding of ECCDE context and culture in developing context, especially sub-Saharan Africa. Strong knowledge of the Nigerian (or at least other developing countries) context and understanding of international development issues, including the status of the humanitarian-development nexus nationally and at the state level in Nigeria, particularly as it relates to education for girls and marginalized populations. <p><u>Other skills and attributes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working in or as a direct consultant for UN organizations is considered an asset • Excellent written and oral communication skills in English, with experience translating evidence for and communicating with a broad range of actors (including government) on sensitive issues • Ability to present ideas concisely for diverse audiences and to give practical, actionable advice grounded in evidence <p><u>Language requirements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency in English is required.
<p>Application and Selection:</p>	

All applicants will be screened against qualifications and requirements set above. Candidates fully meeting all the requirements will be further evaluated based on the criteria below.

1. Technical Criteria - Interview – 80 % of total evaluation– max. 80 points

- Education: 25 points
- Previous experience: 25 points
- Technical questions at the interview: 30 point
- Only candidates who obtained at least 80% of points from the technical part (who will score at least 80 points) will be qualified for considering for financial proposal evaluation.

2. Financial Criteria - 20 % of total evaluation – max. 20 points.

- Financial scores will be calculated using the formula [lowest offer / financial offer of the candidate x 20].

As part of the selection process, the office will select the individual who quoted the lowest fee from the list of individuals who are deemed suitable for achieving all tasks in time, and as per the criteria and deliverables stipulated in the Terms of Reference.

Administrative details:

Visa assistance required:

Transportation arranged by the office:

Home Based Office Based:

If office based, seating arrangement identified:

IT and Communication equipment required:

Internet access required: