

TERMS OF REFERENCE

SHORT TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT

National ECD Coordinator - Samoa

BACKGROUND

Pacific Regional Progress on ECD

Pacific Island leaders have been making significant progress on ECD, demonstrating the political will and whole-of-society action to support the optimal development of its youngest citizens. Guided by the Pasifika Call to Action on ECD, countries have been making coordinated ECD investments, national multi-sectoral ECD policies and improved services in early childhood education, health, nutrition, child protection, WASH, child-focused social protection and parenting support.

In 2019, the Pacific Regional Council for ECD (PRC4ECD) was established and is comprised of Ministers and Permanent Secretaries from across the finance and social sectors – a model of a high-level, geo-political network for ECD that is globally recognized.

ECD in Samoa

Samoa, situated in the South Pacific, stands as an independent nation with a land area of 2,820 square kilometers, encompassing two primary islands, Upolu and Savai'i, along with eight smaller ones. As of 2022, its population totals 222,382, with nearly 80% residing on Upolu. The demographic skews youthful, with approximately 56% under 25 and 13% under 5 years old (29,229). The 2021 Census indicates full participation in education from Early Childhood to Primary levels. Data from 2023 reveals, 7% stunting rate among children under 5 and a 16% lack of adequate supervision. Furthermore, only 73% of children are deemed developmentally on track (nurturing-care.org).

The Samoan government in collaboration with relevant ministries, UNICEF, and partners developed a multi-sectoral ECD strategic framework and costed action plan, led by Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO). Under the guidance of the government's Convention on the Child Rights (CRC) Committee, a dedicated task force on ECD was activated to oversee the development of strategic framework and the costed implementation plan.

The multi-sectoral strategic framework elevates ECD as a national priority by:

- Empowering coordination of multisectoral approaches across sectors, especially the lead Ministries such as Health, Education, Sport, Women, Environment, Agriculture, and Finance.
- Encouraging NGOs, mass media, private sector, donor partners, and communities to support, collaborate, and invest in early childhood development.
- Establishing a stronger sense of responsibility for Early Childhood Development, recognizing that society has a role and stake in ensuring optimal development conditions for all.
- Supporting government efforts to identify financing gaps and areas to strengthen, using platforms like the District Development Program to promote ECD partnerships and community engagement.

In 2025, Samoa is honored to host the next Pacific ECD Forum; the first time this will be held outside of Fiji. Samoa is committed to using the Nurturing Care Framework for ECD as the foundational evidence-based platform that illustrates how a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach can promote nurturing care for our youngest members of society. In addition to the components of the Nurturing Care Framework, we have a strong focus on faith, culture, and climate action.

Both the strategic framework and the costed implementation plan have been submitted to the government, and a final endorsement is awaited. These two documents support and are in alignment with the broader Pasifika Call to Action on ECD, the 2050 Strategy for Blue Pacific Continent and the SDGs.

MWCSO Samoa is committed to seeing through the implementation of the strategic framework with a variety of activities on ECD, in addition to the effective preparation of a successful ECD Forum, but needs additional technical support to fulfill this responsibility,

OBJECTIVE / SCOPE OF WORK

The National ECD Coordinator is responsible for supporting the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development in the coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a national workplan on Early Childhood Development

(ECD), led by the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, with full engagement of Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, and other relevant Ministries and stakeholders.

Specifically, the individual is expected to:

1. Conduct multi-stakeholder dialogues and support reviewing/writing Strategic Framework drafts to support the endorsement and implementation of a national ECD Strategic Framework and costed action plan, with technical support from UNICEF and other partners. Ensure the plan reflects all aspects of the ECD Framework, and links to sectoral priorities and is costed with clear finance plans in place;
2. Bring together the Ministries of Health, Education, Sport, Women, Environment, Agriculture, Finance, and other relevant Ministries stakeholders in the implementation of a multi-sectoral workplan on Early Childhood Development,
3. Support the functioning of the National ECD committee and on a day- to -day basis support the work with the National ECD committee and related technical working groups, including but not limited to convening meetings and preparing meeting notes, reporting on developments on ECD and preparing materials, with the overall goal of establishing effective inter-ministerial working arrangements for early childhood;
4. Prepare activities and events for advocacy and communication on ECD. Advocate for ECD and produce advocacy materials, as necessary and with support from UNICEF and other ministries, to raise awareness of ECD amongst key stakeholders in Samoa.
5. Ensure programme implementation of current initiatives on ECD, including operational support to projects on ECD (e.g. timely liquidation of project funds from UNICEF);
6. Engage effectively with internal and external stakeholders on ECD and facilitate positive communication channels amongst all players;
7. Support positive parenting work as part of ECD activities including but not limited to dissemination of the positive parenting messages through the community representatives including 51 District level entities, multi-media platforms and field level monitoring on the acceptance and effectiveness of the parenting messages at the community level;
8. Contribute and support in the preparation of the ECD Forum to be held in Samoa in 2025;
9. Under the guidance of the Ministry support any other key actions tasked by the Social Development Division, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development during the planning, implementation and launch of the National ECD Framework and 2025 Regional Forum.

ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINES, PLUS PAYMENT SCHEUDLE PER DELIVERABLE

ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLES	ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE	PAYMENT (%)
Conduct multi-stakeholder dialogues and support reviewing/writing Strategic Framework drafts to support the endorsement and implementation of a national ECD Strategic Framework and costed action plan, with technical support from UNICEF and other partners. Ensure the plan reflects all aspects of the ECD Framework, and links to sectoral priorities and is costed with clear finance plans in place.	ECD coordination workplan for the duration of the contract, with key deliverables each month		

<p>Bring together the Ministries of Health, Education, Sport, Women, Environment, Agriculture, Finance, and other relevant Ministries stakeholders in the implementation of a multi-sectoral workplan on Early Childhood Development.</p>	<p>Report on how the multi-sectoral ECD workplan of Samoa is endorsed and implemented, with significant buy-in from all relevant ministries and with key milestones properly documented with data and monitoring reports.</p>		
<p>Support the functioning of the National ECD committee and on a day- to -day basis support the work with the National ECD committee and related technical working groups, including but not limited to convening meetings and preparing meeting notes, reporting on developments on ECD and preparing materials, with the overall goal of establishing effective inter-ministerial working arrangements for early childhood;</p>	<p>Report on how the national multi-sectoral ECD strategic framework and action plan is designed in a consultative manner with key ministries, stakeholders and communities. This strategic framework and action plan are expected to be launched in October 2024.</p>		
<p>Prepare activities and events for advocacy and communication on ECD. Advocate for ECD and produce advocacy materials, as necessary and with support from UNICEF and other ministries, to raise awareness of ECD amongst key stakeholders in Samoa;</p>	<p>Report on the status of the advocacy materials and the progress status of the national ECD committee/technical working group. including ToRs and meeting minutes properly documented.</p>		
<p>Ensure programme implementation of current initiatives on ECD, including operational support to projects on ECD (e.g. timely liquidation of project funds from UNICEF);</p>	<p>Reports on ECD, including contributions to regional reports for the Pacific Regional Council for ECD,</p>		

Support positive parenting work as part of ECD activities including but not limited to dissemination of the positive parenting messages through the community representatives including 51 District level entities, multi-media platforms and field level monitoring on the acceptance and effectiveness of the parenting messages at the community level ;	are in accordance with reporting standards and submitted within the agreed timeframe.		
Contribute and support in the preparation of the ECD Forum to be held in Samoa in 2025.	Report on the progress and status of the ECD Forum.		
Under the guidance of the Ministry support any other key actions tasked by the Social Development Division, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development during the planning, implementation and launch of the National ECD Framework and 2025 Regional Forum.	Report and documentation of key ECD governmental activities and workshops.		

QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

Bachelors Masters PhD Other

Provide details of the expected educational qualifications.

The Person should have at least a bachelor's degree in social policy, Development Studies, Early Childhood Education, Family Health, or a relevant field. Advanced degrees in these areas will be considered an asset.

- At least 5 years of experience in civil service, preferably in the areas of health, nutrition, education, social policy or child protection.
- Experience in public policy, planning, systems development or service delivery for young children, women and families; experience in cross-cutting and multi-sectoral projects considered an asset;
- Demonstrated ability to work in a multi-cultural environment and establish harmonious and effective working relationships, both within and outside the workplace
- Sound political judgement and the ability to navigate politics and identify key players and make sound judgments about influencing strategies to achieve outcomes;
- Ability to provide mentoring and capacity building to colleagues;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.

CONDITIONS OF WORK AND CLARIFICATION ON SUPERVISION

Supervision shall be provided by the Chief of Field Office for UNICEF Samoa, with technical oversight supported by the UNICEF Pacific ECD Specialist, in collaboration with the National Education Specialist. Both will liaise with CEO MWCSO to ensure the technical support is meeting the needs of the Ministry.

A specific work plan shall be developed based on these Terms of Reference, to be reviewed by UNICEF and approved by MWCSO. In the interests of coordination, a monthly meeting shall be held with the consultant, MWCSO and UNICEF to review progress. Payments will be made on the basis of

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- 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.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible to ensure that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts. UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant/ contractor.
- Consultant/Contractor will be required to complete mandatory online courses (e.g. Ethics, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Security) upon receipt of offer and before the signature of contract.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

- Please submit a **separate financial offer** along with your application. The financial proposal should be a **lump sum amount for all the deliverables** and should show a break down for the following:
- Monthly / Daily fees– based on the deliverables in the Terms of Reference above
- Travel (economy air ticket where applicable to take up assignment and field mission travel)
- Living allowance where travel is required
- Miscellaneous- to cover visa, health insurance (including medical evacuation for international consultants), communications, and other costs.