

Consultancy to lead research, technical support and coordination of the Strategic Technical Assistance for Research (STAR) Initiative to end harmful practices	Type of engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor	Duty Station: Remote
Purpose of Activity/Assignment: The Child Rights and Protection team at UNICEF Innocenti is seeking a qualified consultant to lead research, technical support and coordination for quality research design and implementation of a range of evidence-related projects and activities as part of the STAR (Strategic Technical Assistance for Research) Initiative to end harmful traditional practices with a particular focus on child marriage.		
Scope of Work: <p>The UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti (OoR) undertakes high-quality research that contributes to evidence-informed policy making. Through the STAR (Strategic Technical Assistance for Research) Initiative to end harmful practices, the Child Rights and Protection team at Innocenti, in partnership with the joint UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage (GPECM), aims to strengthen availability of quality evidence on child marriage prevention strategies in 12 participating countries (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia) and beyond.</p> <p>As part of the STAR initiative, UNICEF Innocenti is supporting UNICEF and UNFPA country offices in the conceptualization, research design, analysis, writing and dissemination of research studies focused on early, child and forced marriage (hereafter referred to in shorthand as “child marriage”) prevention and the needs and rights of adolescents. In addition to providing technical research support to GPECM countries, the STAR initiative also aims to synthesize evidence and respond to critical knowledge gaps in the areas of child marriage and other harmful practices such as FGM.</p> <p>The Innocenti Child Rights and Protection team is seeking a consultant to lead research, technical support and coordination linked to evidence generation, uptake and use on child marriage and harmful practices for the STAR initiative.</p> Responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide strategic advice and support to GPECM leadership team and Secretariat and country offices including assisting with the prioritization of research studies, advising on/accompanying meetings when necessary, identifying opportunities for the STAR Initiative to support new and planned studies. ▪ Lead activities across the STAR Initiative’s workstreams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support GPECM countries in high-quality evidence generation: a) Provide hands-on guidance and technical research support to current GPECM priority research studies (including research focus, design implementation and analysis, review of research concept notes, literature reviews, TOR, protocols, questionnaires, training materials and study results; b) engage with GPECM countries periodically to identify further countries and new studies requiring technical support; c) Manage the STAR initiative, coordinating additional Innocenti researchers providing support, and identifying and overseeing appropriate technical support to country studies 		

- Coordinate evidence synthesis to respond to knowledge gaps: a) Oversee the development and implementation of an evidence synthesis plan including systematic and scoping reviews and evidence summary briefs that synthesize evidence on key topics linked to ending harmful practices; b) Support translation of available evidence into policy and programmatic recommendations; and c) Support the establishment and updating of global database of child marriage research
 - Coordinate research uptake and use, and related capacity strengthening activities: a) Support planning and execution of learning clinics and country and regional workshops to share evidence; b) support global, regional and national dissemination events and discussions on available evidence on effective strategies for ending child marriage and other harmful practices.
 - Coordinate with the UN Joint Programme to end FGM to identify rollout and support for research strategy as appropriate and relevant.
- Overall management of the STAR initiative including: creating visibility for project progress and milestones through regular documentation and internal communication; contributing to budget oversight and donor reporting as required; providing regular updates and organizing meetings as required of the informal governance/advisory structure supporting the initiative; working as a liaison and partner with UNICEF Innocenti researchers, GPECM Secretariat, and UNICEF and UNFPA HQ, regional and country offices to deliver effective evidence support

Duration of the consultancy:

The consultant will work full-time over a period of 6 months (total of 108 working days, 18 days per month), with a starting date planned of 17th January 2022.

Supervision and work arrangements:

The consultant will be working remotely and will report to the Chief, Child Rights and Protection and work closely with the GPECM Secretariat

Work Assignment Overview		
Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline
Identification of prioritised studies to support through periodic review and consultation meetings with GPECM Secretariat, UNFPA and UNICEF regional and country offices to be informed of their workplans and to identify opportunities for technical support from the STAR Initiative; and coordination with the Joint Programme to End FGM to identify opportunities to support the rollout of the research strategy.	Reports of bi-weekly steering group calls, country calls and decision minutes	Monthly coordination meetings and additional as required, Jan-June 2022
Coordinate Innocenti researchers allocated to country studies, provide and oversee technical support to country studies across study phases (research design, data collection, data analysis, preparation of outputs, and dissemination) including identifying and supplying additional tailored skills support that countries required for research studies	Maintain STAR Initiative Activity Tracker to ensure project milestones are being met.	January – June 2022
Plan, coordinate and oversee the development of an Evidence database on child marriage research and an Evidence and Gap Map	Database and EGM concept note and development	Jan-June 2022
Plan and execute at least one learning clinic	1-2 Learning Clinics on research methodology designed and delivered	March and June 2022
Manage budget and donor report contributions	Regular budget reports and donor report inputs	Monthly
Coordinate and oversee the planning and execution of conferences and meetings	At least 1 global evidence conference/webinar conceptualised and planned with GPECM Secretariat	June 2022
Minimum Qualifications required: <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other Enter Disciplines: Statistics, Economics, Public Policy, Public Health, Sociology or related field	Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required: Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7-10 years of relevant work experience • Technical expertise on research and evaluation design and implementation related to gender equality, child rights, particularly harmful practices, including mixed methods research in LMIC. 	

- Knowledge of the child marriage field including progress and research priorities, with specific reference to one or more GPECM countries (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia)
- Analytical and research expertise on one or more of these areas: gender, social norms, community-based programmes, adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, poverty
- Mixed methods expertise, including experience conducting quantitative impact evaluations qualitative work, including process evaluations
- Excellent people management skills with demonstrated experience in a coordinator or manager role that involved overseeing a team of researchers
- Ability to negotiate, persuade and build coalitions
- Must be highly organized and efficient, possess excellent judgement with a demonstrated ability to handle multiple tasks, complex issues, and competing priorities with excellent attention to detail and high standard for quality of product
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, able to effectively synthesize information to reach diverse audiences and build consensus, as well as communicate project and program results
- Demonstrated experience or familiarity with evidence syntheses including conducting systematic reviews, managing evidence databases and/or evidence and gap maps
- Comfortable in a wide range of cultural, geographic, and operational situations, demonstrating culturally sensitive behaviour with a diverse range of people

	<p>Desirable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recent (high quality) publications on relevant topics• French language skills <p>Core Values: Care, Respect, Integrity, Trust, Accountability (CRITA)</p>
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