

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORs)

OVERVIEW

TITLE	Desk review and analysis of child/adolescent mental health evidence in Jamaica
LOCATION OF ASSIGNMENT	Kingston, Jamaica (work from home)
LANGUAGE(S) REQUIRED	Fluent English,
TRAVEL	None
DURATION OF CONTRACT	6 weeks
ANNUAL WORK PLAN REFERENCE	
SECTION & UNIT	
CONSULTANT REPORTING TO	Novia Condell Gibson

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Adolescents and young people’s access to mental health services represent an outstanding challenge in Jamaica. According to the 2017 Global School Health Survey (GSHS), one in every four students had considered suicide. In addition, the Ministry of Health and Wellness reports that up to 60% of those treated at hospitals for attempted suicides were adolescents and young people under age 24. Young women and girls appear to be more impacted by mental health challenges. A recent study revealed that among those who were treated at hospital for suicide attempt, 82.5% were female and 17.5% were male. Drug overdose was the most common method of suicide attempt (55.1%) with interpersonal conflict being the most common reason for the attempt (49.2%). When it came to completed suicides among young people, males were in the majority with 66% of suicides and the most common method was by hanging.

The stress and anxiety caused by the impact of COVID 19 has aggravated the mental health of adolescents and young people, making an ‘outbreak’ of mental health problems a potential threat. A study on the Socioeconomic Impact of COVID 19 conducted by UNICEF and CAPRI in 2020 showed that most households reported increases in children’s level of boredom (63%), overeating (57%), frustration (41%), clinginess (49%), anxiety (23%), and fear (21%). The impact of school closures, separation from social groups and social distancing has had a tremendous effect on children and youth mental health and their ability to access peer-support or necessary services. Adolescents are often unable to access counselling support and community based mental health services, largely due to the limited capacity within the public health sector. Issues such as community and family violence, stigma, and discrimination against people with mental health challenges are also barriers to service uptake.

One of the aims of UNICEF Jamaica’s new Country Programme 2022-2026 is to help ensure that adolescents have improved access to gender-responsive health services and .to promote the reduction of stigma around mental health and risk-taking behaviours among adolescent boys and girls, by addressing harmful social norms, improving access to and quality of services and facilitating a demand for services by adolescents.

As such, UNICEF Jamaica is developing an adolescent mental health advocacy strategy with the ultimate goal that by 2023, the national Cabinet approves a cross-sectoral national policy and action plan for improving mental health of children and adolescents, with a focus on early prevention and treatment in communities and public institutions. In developing the strategy, UNICEF has identified the need to develop compelling evidence-driven arguments that capture the most relevant data available on adolescents and mental health, particularly as it relates to return on investment (refer to the strategy canvas provided for more information).

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For this purpose, UNICEF is seeking a consultant to conduct a desk review which will synthesize existing data on the situation of mental health and access to mental health services by adolescents and young people in Jamaica.

OBJECTIVES & SCOPE OF WORK

The anticipated result of this undertaking is that UNICEF Jamaica Country Office is better informed to advocate for increased investment in adolescent and young people's mental health, with a focus on improving access to mental health services.

The assignment is for 7 weeks and is expected to meet the following specific objectives:

1. Provide a synthesis of available national data and information on the mental health of, and access to services by, adolescents and young people. This includes childhood neglect, abuse, adversities and children in contact or conflict with the law (which impact mental health outcomes in the long term),
2. Conduct a mapping of the critical national laws, policies and programmes that address quality of, and access to mental health services for children and adolescents
3. Identify potential advocacy asks around adolescent mental health, based on the most relevant data and in keeping with the advocacy strategy goal.

METHODOLOGY

The consultant will provide technical assistance, through a desk review, to UNICEF Jamaica. Utilizing data and information sources, as well as any other documentation on the situation of mental health and services particularly in focusing on the vulnerabilities of adolescents and youth. The consultant is expected to develop a comprehensive analytical report, summarizing existing evidence on child and adolescent mental health status and services and outlining:

- (a) the situation and identifying the most vulnerable populations
- (b) a well-defined, strategic focus for UNICEF on mental health advocacy for children

The report should consider all the components needed for a comprehensive understanding of the situation of child and adolescent mental health in Jamaica. It will address the following but not be limited to:

- Collate and assess existing data on the status of child and adolescent mental health, and identify critical information gaps
- Document existing services for child and adolescent mental health, including provisions for children in contact or conflict with the law and other vulnerable groups
- Document existing laws and policies that address or hinder access to and the quality of mental health services for adolescents and children
- Identify key gaps in national policies and programmes/services
- Identify lessons learnt from existing programmes and interventions that should be incorporated.

The document's outline and content are suggested as follows:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Background and Rationale
- Methodology
- Review & Analysis of Evidence
- Key Advocacy Messages
- Key Evidence Gaps/Further areas for research
- Conclusion

Based on the final version of the report, a presentation should be developed to share the findings of the analysis with UNICEF Jamaica.

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ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The secondary data for this review are not expected to contain personal and/or sensitive personal data. Notwithstanding the consultant is expected to conform to the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation and Data Collection and Analysis

<https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/documents/unicef-procedure-ethical-standards-research-evaluation-data-collection-and-analysis>

TIMEFRAME

Start date: May 15, 2022

End date: June 24, 2022

Key Deliverables	Duration	Comments
1. Proposed workplan for the consultancy	3 days	
2. Analytical report with recommendations for strategic focus and entry points for UNICEF Jamaica.	6 weeks	
4. Presentation on findings, outlining key areas for advocacy and recommendations for programmatic responses for mental health	7 days	Based on the final analytical report

KEY COMPETENCES, TECHNICAL BACKGROUND, AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

- Advanced university degree (Masters, ABD or PhD) in Adolescent and Child Health or Psychology or related discipline (counseling, social work, etc.)
- Five (5) years of professional experience in research, policy or technical assistance related to mental health in Jamaica
- Experience in qualitative or quantitative data analysis
- Strong knowledge of the health sector and mental health issues facing children and adolescents.
- Demonstrated ability to produce clear, succinct policy and report writing
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English required
- Ability to work independently and respond to feedback in a timely and professional manner
- Excellent organizational skills, attention to detail, and ability to contribute to a team

For every child, you demonstrate..... UNICEF's core values of Commitment, Diversity and Integrity and core competencies in Communication, Working with People and Drive for Results. UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages all candidates, irrespective of gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality, culture, appearance, socio-economic status, ability, age, religious and ethnic backgrounds to apply to become a part of the organization. UNICEF has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNICEF, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. UNICEF also adheres to

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strict child safeguarding principles. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks, and will be expected to adhere to these standards and principles.

UNICEF is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

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PROPOSED BY: (INSERT REQUESTING OFFICER NAME & TITLE)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

AUTHORIZED BY: (INSERT AUTHORIZING OFFICER NAME & TITLE)

Signature: _____ Date: _____