

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS
NATIONAL CONSULTANCY- CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION

1. Background

Childhood obesity is a serious public health problem in Mongolia. The National Nutrition Survey 2017 revealed that 12% of children under 5 years of age, 29% of school-age children are overweight and obese. In addition, half of all adults (46.2%) of 15-49 years of age are overweight and obese. In addition, COVID-19 pandemic restrictions of movement significantly increased the risk of overweight among children and adults. Obesity can affect child's immediate health, educational attainment and quality of life.

For school children, increased exposure to and consumption of unhealthy "junk" foods and lower levels of physical activity are considered to be key drivers of weight gain. Mongolia's rapid economic growth and urbanization in recent years have produced a dietary transition towards consumption of unhealthy, ultra-processed "junk" foods and reduced physical activity for both children and adults in urban and rural areas alike. The NNS V revealed high levels of consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages such as carbonated soda and sweetened teas by school children 6-11 years with 81% of children consuming these drinks at least once a week. Consumption of other "junk" items including fried snacks such as chips and crisps and sweet foods like cakes, cookies, and pies was nearly universal amongst children 6-11 years with 99% consuming these types of foods at least once in the previous week. In other side, Mongolians have unique eating patterns with predominantly high-energy diets from meat, dairy products, and grains, especially among traditional herders in rural areas who generally lack a diverse diet. These food consumption practices are linked to a high risk of overweight and obesity, but are traditionally balanced by a high level of physical activity which are decreasing nowadays: 78.7% of children (11-17 years) do less than 1 hour of physical exercise per day¹.

Addressing and preventing the high and growing prevalence of overweight and obesity in Mongolian adults and children is vitally important to not only the health of the Mongolian people, but the Mongolian economy as obesity is linked to increased medical costs, reduced productivity, and reductions in educational attainment and achievement². For example, obesity is a leading cause of cardiovascular disease which alone constitutes 55% of all hospitalizations in Mongolia and is responsible for 37% of all deaths in the country³. Progress in tackling overweight and obesity in Mongolia has been very slow and not highly prioritized in the Government agenda. The National Nutrition Programme 2016-2025 has specific objectives to improve the nutritional status of children in preschools and schools. However, the programme implementation is slow due to the country economic difficulties since 2015.

¹ Global Health Observatory data repository, Mongolia, Prevalence of insufficient physical activity among adolescents, 2016
<https://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.main.GSWCAH27v?lang=en>

² Hammond RA, Levine R. The economic impact of obesity in the United States. *Diabetes, metabolic syndrome and obesity: targets and therapy*. 2010; 3: 285-295. doi:10.2147/DMSOTT.S7384.

³ S.Ariuntuya, Kh.Narantuya, S.Davaajargal, T.Enkhjargal, & T.Unurtsetseg. (2011). Health Indicator Mongolia 2011. Government of Mongolia

Since the start of the UNICEF Mongolia Country Programme 2017-2021, the childhood obesity prevention has been identified as the priority area for UNICEF nutrition programme and several actions including the nutrition and physical activity lessons in primary and secondary schools, school meal recipes and standards, modelling school canteens, promotion of healthy eating and physical activity for children in schools and kindergartens have been undertaken.

2. Purpose of Assignment:

The purpose of the assignment is to technically support and ensure documentation of the progress of the obesity prevention programme implementation with particular focus on school nutrition programmes in UNICEF focus areas including Bayanzurkh district, Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai, Zavkhan and Umnugobi provinces.

3. Scope of Work:

- Provide support for implementation and monitoring of school nutrition programme including:
 - Support the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health, and the National Centre for Public Health to finalize draft kitchen/canteen standards for school and kindergarten and get approval, including draft recipes of school meals for children with specific needs and dormitory meals, related publications, its rolling-out;
 - Support the school nutrition assessment and related workshops.
 - Support implementation and monitoring school nutrition programme in selected 6 schools and 6 kindergartens in focus areas including including Bayanzurkh district, Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai, Zavkhan and Umnugobi provinces to ensure that children receive safe and nutritious meals, nutrition and physical activity education, behavior change communication activities for children, parents and teachers;
 - Technical support in rolling out peer nutrition education in including pre-testing and adaptation of peer nutrition education handbook in cooperation with the NCPH and the selected NGO.
 - Build capacities of preschool and school chefs in focus areas including Bayanzurkh district, Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai, Zavkhan and Umnugobi provinces;
 - Technical support in the procurement of equipment and supplies; behavior change and communication campaigns for children and parents in focus areas; renovation of school and preschool canteens/kitchens;
 - Facilitate and support production of case studies, lessons learned, and visibility materials related to obesity prevention and school nutrition programme.
- Support in development and design of advocacy and communication materials/activities for obesity prevention programme;

4. Programme Area and Specific Project Involved: Health, Education, Private Sector engagement and Communications.

5. Contract duration (start and end date): 15 June 2022-15 March 2023 (9 months period)

6. Type of engagement:

☐ Deliverable based(home based) ☒ Full-time, office based ☐ Part-time, office based

7. Deliverables, Timeframe and Payment Schedule:

DELIVERABLES	Timeline
Bidding and contracting process finalized for school and kindergarten canteen supplies	30 June 2022
Trainings of preschool and school chefs in focus areas completed	30 October 2022
School Nutrition Assessment completed and submitted to the UNICEF Regional Office.	30 September 2022
School and kindergarten kitchen standards; school meal recipes for children with specific needs; dormitory meal recipes finalized; and publications completed.	30 November 2022
Workshop on school nutrition environment organized	28February 2022
Trainings on peer nutrition education completed in focus areas	30 December 2022
Final draft of 1 case study and/or 2 human interest story related to obesity prevention and school nutrition programme	30 January 2023
Publication of 5 obesity prevention advocacy and communication materials	28 February 2023
Final report	5 March 2023

Full-time consultant: (suggest)

The consultant will be paid upon the presentation and acceptance of the satisfactory monthly progress report with the completion of key deliverables.

8. Project Management:

Direct supervisor: Nutrition Officer

Frequency of performance review: Review monthly progress report

9. Qualifications and requirements:

- a. **Minimum qualifications required:** Masters or advanced degree in nutrition, food, public health, or related field.
- b. **Relevant working experience:** 3 years of progressively responsible professional work experience at the national and/or international levels in nutrition, food, health, programme/project development, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, communication, and information management.
- c. **Knowledge/expertise/ skills required:** Fluency in Mongolian and English (verbal and written). Good written and spoken skills in the language of the development programme and knowledge of another UN language an asset.

Nature of 'Penalty Clause' to be Stipulated in Contract:

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold the consultancy fee in the case that the deliverables are not submitted on schedule or do not meet the required standard. Copyright and ownership of all documents produced will remain with UNICEF.

Note: 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.