

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS & INSTITUTIONAL CONTRACTORS

Title of Consultancy: Review of Early Childhood Development Project in Guadalcanal	Requesting Section/Hiring Manager: Early Childhood Education Specialist (Cross-Sectoral Team)	Type of engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant (ZCON) <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor (ZIND) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional Contract	Duty Station: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office Based <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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Background and Purpose of Activity/Assignment:

Guadalcanal Province in the Solomon Islands has a multi-faceted landscape, in terms of geography, governance and political administration. It is one of Solomon Island's nine provinces located in the southeast part of the country. It consists of the largest island of the country - Guadalcanal - as well as the capital Honiara, although the latter has been designated as a separately administered Capital Territory and is no longer considered part of the province. Guadalcanal is mountainous and heavily forested in its interior, while its coast is lined with palms and white sandy beaches. The province has very limited infrastructure. The northern coast is the heart of the province, whereas the southern coast is host to smaller villages and is less accessible.

Like other provinces in the country, Guadalcanal has a provincial assembly headed by a premier and is subdivided into wards as determined by population size. The province is sub-divided into 22 wards for administrative purposes and each ward elects a representative to the provincial assembly. The responsibility of service delivery rests with provincial governments. Most ministries do not have active personnel or representation in the provincial governments. This has affected the translation of well-meaning legislation and policy from the central level to the community level. Guadalcanal province also has eight elected members of parliament (MP), each with their own constituency development funds that they can disburse to their respective constituencies in the province.

Early childhood development (ECD) outcomes in Guadalcanal show many young children deprived of their rights to optimal development. The province has the highest rates of stunting in the country, with 36 per cent of children stunted and 14 per cent severely stunted, primarily by exposure to faecal contaminated environments. The province also has one of the lowest pre-primary enrolment rates. Only one parent in 62 per cent of households is engaged in early learning activities. Many children are exposed to and affected by domestic violence. And only about one fourth of children under the age of five have a birth certificate – the only official documentation to prove their legal existence and access to services. Moreover, Guadalcanal province accounts for the biggest share of persons living in poverty in Solomon Islands (considering absolute numbers), given that it has higher poverty risk as well as larger population size. Many are extremely poor in Guadalcanal and live substantially below the basic needs-poverty line.

UNICEF Pacific is supporting the implementation of a comprehensive ECD project in Guadalcanal Province, funded and supported by UNICEF Australia and the Australian government. The project, which started in July 2018 and is expected to close in 30 June 2022, is in response to the poor young child development indicators in Guadalcanal and spurred by the overwhelming evidence of the link between ECD and the success and wellbeing of individuals and societies. Experiences during the early years matter because it affects the development of brain architecture that is the foundation for all future learning, behaviour and health. At a broader socio-economic level, early years' investments demonstrate the highest rates of return among public investment options, with benefits accruing to society in the form of higher incomes, better health, and lower crime rates.

The main objective of the ECD project are the following:

- Provincial coordination ECD coordination mechanism established and strengthened to support delivery of ECD services.
- Capacity of frontline ECD workers enhanced to deliver quality services for young children and their parents.
- Parents, caregivers, and community actors have improved knowledge and skills to provide holistic care for young children.

The main beneficiary is the Guadalcanal Provincial Authority, whose capacity to deliver quality ECD services will be improved, including its frontline ECD workers in education, health and child protection. It will also benefit 100 per cent of health workers in Guadalcanal Province from 6 Area Health Centres (AHCs) and 18 Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), 100 per cent of social welfare officers, and 100 per cent of all ECCE teachers in the province. The indirect target beneficiaries are at least 60 per cent of the estimated 18,000 children under 5 in Guadalcanal reached by one or more ECD services.

The project promotes and reinforces multi-sectoral synergies and strategies, bringing together services that address the needs of young children on health, nutrition, hygiene, early learning, stimulation and responsive care and over-all well-being.

In 2019, through the support of UNICEF, the Guadalcanal Provincial Authority established the ECD Provincial Technical Working Group (PTWG) and recruited a Provincial ECD Manager. This ECD PTWG was identified among current members of technical heads of provincial government and charged with overseeing the strategic coordination and oversight for ECD activities in the province. The PTWG is made up of the Permanent Secretary to the province, Chief Executive of the Education Authority, the Director of Provincial Health Services and the Chief Planning Officer. The members also agreed that this ECD PTWG will have regular meetings that include the provincial ward members, given their key role in facilitating community engagement on ECD. The ECD PTWG is currently overseeing the development of a provincial ECD action plan, informed by a situation analysis of ECD services and programmes and widespread community consultations.

UNICEF is also supporting Guadalcanal with community mobilization on ECD, in partnership with the Guadalcanal Women's Council. This helps communities – inclusive of parents and families of young children - raise their awareness of and improve skills in responsive caregiving. The work is currently being conducted by 120 community facilitators comprised of health workers, teachers, and other community members.

Additional work supported by UNICEF includes completion of how-to-guides for community mobilization by health care workers, an ECD induction package for all ECD workers, a community facilitation package conducted by social welfare officers, and a community-led sanitation programme to improve sanitation and hygiene practices in the province.

Purpose of Assignment:

This exercise sets out to review the performance of the ECD in Guadalcanal project as regards to its effectiveness and with an aim to inform decision-making for future ECD programming, including national scale-up and adaptation to other Pacific island countries. The review, envisioned to be a simple but robust undertaking, will be guided by the results framework outlined in the original project proposal.

By providing sound and credible evidence on what works, what does not work, the review serves a dual purpose of both enhancing accountability and informing decision-making processes, especially UNICEF and Guadalcanal Provincial Authority's future strategies and programme development in ECD. The primary audience of this review are UNICEF Pacific, UNICEF Australia and key partners, and ECD stakeholders in Guadalcanal, inclusive of the PTWG.

Scope of Work:

The review will focus on the following objectives:

1. To determine the extent that ECD coordination has been effective in Guadalcanal in terms of more coordinated programme planning and implementation, service delivery, and communications and advocacy;
2. To determine the extent to which the capacity of ECD frontline workers have been enhanced to deliver quality services for young children and their parents;
3. To determine the effectiveness of the community mobilization plan implemented by Guadalcanal Women's Council in terms of raising awareness across communities on ECD and responsive caregiving;
4. Based on the findings with regards to numbers 1-3 above, identify facilitating factors, key programme achievements and challenges encountered in the implementation and the lessons learned;
5. Based on the outcomes of the review, generate a set of clear, forward-looking, and actionable recommendations logically linked to the findings and conclusions. These concrete recommendations will include simple and specific guidance on how to implement the province's ECD costed action plan, monitor its implementation, scale up ECD sub-national coordination to other provinces, and reach out to communities on ECD.

The review will cover the period from 2018 July until the time of the review data collection, considering that some aspects of the programme would still be under implementation during early 2022. The consultant will need to work closely with MEHRD to ensure that the timing of the review's phases is aligned with key calendar events, stakeholder availability and the desired outcomes of the review.

Methodology

The review is expected to be mixed method in nature, including relevant quantitative and qualitative methods and in close collaboration with the Guadalcanal Technical Working Group.

The review will be conducted in three phases i.e., 1. the inception, 2. data collection, 3. data analysis, development of key findings, report writing, and presentations. These phases will be implemented in the stated numerical order as the completion of phase 1 is crucial for the preparation and conduct of phases 2 and 3. Once these phases are conducted the implementation of the review is expected to be complete.

Phase 1: Inception report and development of review instruments (5 days, can be done remotely)

- **Inception Report submission:** At the outset, the consultant is expected to have extensive meetings with UNICEF and also conduct a quick desk review, which will include the original project proposal and related documents, theory of change, current implementation and monitoring plans, donor reports, and all other relevant project documents. Existing quantitative data will also be considered and analyzed in the desk review. Based on these discussions and desk review, the consultant will prepare a simple inception report (maximum 10 pages), which will include a clear review design, timeline and detailed methodology for conducting the review
- **Data Collection Instruments:** Development/ testing/adaptation of review instruments like in-depth interview guides, focus group discussion formats, survey formats and other required instruments.
- **Ethical Clearance:** Obtaining of ethical clearance, as needed, from an accredited Ethics Review Board for protection of human subjects.

Phase 2: Data collection (20 days in Solomon Islands)

The consultant is expected to be in-country to collect data for the review. The data collection would focus on collecting key data and information which would enable the consultant team to analyze the ECD project as per the objectives of the review and based on this analysis, develop a clear and concise report detailing the findings and recommendations.

Phase 3: Data Analysis, development of key findings, writing of report, and presentations (10 days can be done remotely)

The consultant will be responsible for the data analysis, writing the report and presentation of review findings to UNICEF Pacific, UNICEF Australia, Guadalcanal Provincial Authority and other

stakeholders. While the consultant is expected to develop a plan for analysis and drafting of the report, here are some guidelines which may be considered.

- Data from different sources must be triangulated to arrive at the findings and develop concrete, coherent and forward-looking conclusions
- The safety of data during the data collection phase will be the total responsibility of the consultant; all information gathered, and tools developed for this review is the property of UNICEF Pacific, copies of which will be made available to UNICEF. No data collected for this review or data to which the consultant is privileged during time of the review as direct or indirect result of being the consultant for this review, can be shared and or used by the consultant neither can s/he approve the use of the whole or any part of it for personal or professional purposes without approval in writing from UNICEF.
- The writing of the report should be done in constant communication with UNICEF. In addition to the report, the consultant is expected to develop a PowerPoint on the review outlining the process, findings, recommendations, and way forward, which would then be presented to UNICEF, Guadalcanal Provincial Authority and other stakeholders.
- The final report (maximum 20 pages) will be approved by UNICEF.

To ensure quality, the consultant is required to adhere to [UNICEF procedure for ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis](#). Data collection and analysis methods should be gender-responsive, and data should be systematically disaggregated by sex and age, and to the extent possible disaggregated by disability status.

Ethical Consideration

To ensure that the key ethical principles for the conduct of research involving human subjects are followed, each potential respondent will be given full information about the review including the purpose and potential benefits of the review, their rights, and how the information collected will be used. They will also be informed that all data will be kept confidentially being only accessible by members of the review team. Verbal consent will be collected from all those who agree to participate. (The person receiving the consent and a witness will sign the consent form). All participants will be informed of their right to discontinue their participation at any point and approaches for ensuring confidentiality will be described.

Ethical evidence generation follows widely held guidelines about what is ethical, moral and responsible (e.g., not plagiarizing others' work, not submitting questionable data, avoiding doing harm, ensuring just distribution of the benefits and risks of the research etc.). Ethical evidence generation is reflective and explicitly considers its impact on both participants and the broader community throughout the research cycle from planning through to dissemination and monitoring and evaluation. The complete document explaining UNICEF Procedure For Ethical Standard in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis is provided here <https://www.unicef.org/media/54796/file> The consultant team is expected to familiarize themselves with the procedure and ensure the review, data collection and analysis are as per procedures.

Consultant's Workplace, Travel and Logistics

This consultancy is open to individual and institutional contracts. It is expected that the work will be split between Solomon Islands (Honiara) and home base, with some travel expected within Solomon Islands. While in Honiara, the consultant will be based at the UNICEF Honiara office.

The lump sum contract includes the cost of all trips on the most direct route and in economy class. All international and domestic travel cost should be budgeted for and included in the total contract value and described in the financial proposal. The selected consultant will be responsible for making own travel arrangements. When relevant and necessary, UNICEF may facilitate the logistics arrangement for field visits, in coordination with the relevant government counterparts. The consultant is expected to have their own laptop, camera, mobile phones and other relevant communications and working equipment. If the consultancy will be taken up by an institution, it is expected that there will be a lead consultant who will represent and coordinate the review and serve as the main representative for the review in the Solomon Islands. If the consultancy is taken up by an individual, this person will play the same role, and be responsible for all sub-contracting as relevant. A member of the review consultancy team is expected to be present in the Solomon Islands during key moments of the review, as indicated in the ToR.

Supervision:

The consultancy will operate under the supervision of a review management team comprised of the Early Childhood Development Specialist and ECD Specialist Consultant (UNICEF Pacific), and Multi-Country Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF. All supervision will be done in collaboration with the PTWG of Guadalcanal Province.

The review management team will be responsible for the day-to-day oversight and management of the review and for the management of the review budget, assure the quality and independence of the review and guarantee its alignment with UNICEF Ethical Guidelines for research, studies and evaluations, provide quality assurance checking that the review findings and conclusions are relevant and recommendations are implementable, and contribute to the dissemination of the review findings.

Bids should include a technical proposal with proposed methodology, timeline and tasks based on the technical expertise and experience of the consultant, maintaining the need for cost-efficiency. Timeline for deliverables in the ToR is indicative only; alternative approaches may be considered with justification. Bids should provide an all-inclusive cost in the financial proposal and should factor in all cost implications for the assignment. Financial bids should be organized by deliverable and should provide detailed cost information to facilitate comparison with other bids.

Evaluation process and Selection Criteria

The following evaluation methodology will be applied to all applications received (I.e. **Institutional Contract and Individual Contract**). It is based on a highest combined score (based on the 70% technical offer and 30% price weight distribution).

Each interested institution/individual will submit a brief a technical proposal to undertake the assignment along with a copy of the organization/Team profile, the proposed technical team

curriculum vitae, expected budget as well as a sample of previous work undertaken in the last five years.

After the opening, each proposal will be assessed first on its technical merits and subsequently on its financial value price. The proposal with the best overall value, composed of technical merit and price, will be recommended for approval. UNICEF will set up an evaluation panel composed of technical and procurement staff and their conclusions will be forwarded to the internal UNICEF Contracts Review Committee or other relevant approving authority. The evaluation panel will first evaluate each response for compliance with the requirements of this Terms of Reference. Responses deemed not to meet all the mandatory requirements will be considered non-compliant and rejected at this stage without further consideration. Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions contained in these Terms of Reference, including provision of all required information, may result in a response or proposal being disqualified from further consideration.

The overall weighting between technical and price evaluation will be based on the predefined criteria. The technical component will account for 70% of the total points allocated and the financial component (commercial evaluation) will account for 30% of the total points allocated.

Item	Technical Criteria/Qualifications	Max. Points
1	Overall Response	15
1.1	Evidence of in-depth knowledge of the key issues and concepts underpinning this review (5) Demonstrated thorough understanding of the ToR, its objectives, scope and deliverables (3)	
1.2	Overall concord between ToR needs and proposal (5) Explanation of a fully tailored and innovative approach for this review (2)	
2	Capability and experience in the field	25
2.1	Information on similar activities having been undertaken by the individuals going to be involved in this review (4) Recent and current contracts with similar agencies (UN, NGOs) (3)	
2.2	Number of years of relevant professional experience in delivering quality reviews of education interventions, and preferably in low and middle-income countries and preferably in the Pacific (5) Experience in international development/public policy/education/health systemsr similar (4) Quality of written report sample (5) Experience leading evaluations, research, studies, or reviews (2) Relevant academic qualifications or training certificates (2)	
3	Proposed Methodology and Approach	30
3.1	Description of the proposed process for conducting the quantitative and qualitative data collection including the tools that will be used (7) References to relevant data and information sources (3) Description of data analysis (3) Other creative, innovative referenced ideas for methodology/tools and presentation of findings (7)	
3.2	Adherence of the proposed timeframe and workplan of the ToR (3) Adherence to all the milestones outlined in the ToR (2)	
3.3	At least two considerations and/or risks outlined (3) Description of methods to manage/mitigate these constraints/risks (2)	

Total Technical Score		70
<p>Only Proposers obtaining a minimum of 49 points in Technical Criteria evaluation will be considered for the Financial Evaluation.</p> <p>Commercial evaluation:</p> <p>The price/cost of each of the technically compliant proposals shall be considered only after evaluation of the above technical criteria. A maximum 30 point assigned to the financial proposal will be allocated to the lowest financial proposal. All other price proposals will receive scores in inverse proportion according to the following formula:</p> <p>Score for price proposal A = (Maximum score for price proposal * Price of lowest priced proposal)/Price of proposal A.</p> <p>As a result of the financial evaluation, the points of each proposal will be taken into further consideration in the final evaluation.</p>		
Start Date: 24 January 2022	End Date: 15 May 2022	Number of Days: 35 working days

Work Assignment Overview			
Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Due Date	Payment Amount
<p>Desk review of relevant program documents, reports, and secondary data; Stakeholder analysis; Review of ECD project proposal, Theory of Change (ToC) and results measurement table;</p> <p>Prepare 10-page draft inception report, and present to the review management team, receive feedback from management team, and incorporate comments into final inception report;</p> <p>Obtain ethics approval as necessary to commence data collection</p>	<p>Final 10-page inception report¹ (incl. desk review work-plan, data collection tools).</p> <p>Approval letter from ethics board to commence data collection, if appropriate.</p>	09 February 2022	25%
<p>Logistical arrangements for field work, with support of Guadalcanal Provincial Authority and UNICEF Pacific;</p> <p>Pilot tools, conduct data collection, and initial analysis;</p>	Presentation of Data and interview summaries	01 April 2022	25%
<p>Organize validation workshop/meetings to validate data collection results, preliminary findings and recommendations;</p> <p>Further processing and analysis of the collected data, and drafting of the interim report;</p>	Draft review report with key findings, conclusions and recommendations	15 April 2022	25%
<p>Prepare and submit final draft of review report including feedback received and prioritized recommendations;</p>	<p>Final 30-page review report² with 2-page clear and concise executive summary, with up to two revisions;</p> <p>PowerPoint presentation to be used for presentations to UNICEF Pacific, Guadalcanal Provincial Authority and other stakeholders</p>	15 May 2022	25%

¹ Max 10 pages/5,000 words, excluding annex

² Max 30 page/15,000 words, excluding annexes; executive summary 2 pages max; prepared according to the UNICEF Style Guide and UNICEF Brand Toolkit;

Please note that consultant estimated total cost may include additional costs, such as living costs as applicable

Minimum Qualifications required:

☐ Bachelors ☒ Masters ☐ PhD
☐ Other

Enter Disciplines: Education / Health
 / Public Policy / Social Sciences or
 other related fields

Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:

- Proven experience (at least 15 years) and expertise in programme review, and scalability assessment of social sector issues or themes.
- Experience with and knowledge of early childhood education, including early education, health and nutrition, parenting, child protection, WASH and social welfare.
- Demonstrated experience in working in partnership with government, with demonstrated success in building capacity and ensuring ownership.
- An advanced university degree in social or physical sciences or similar qualification.
- An excellent understanding of research methodologies, including experience in applied qualitative and quantitative research techniques, tool development and adaptation with translation and experience in costing, an awareness of human rights (incl. child rights), gender equality and equity in research.
- Previous work experience in the Pacific a considerable asset.
- Proven history of high quality, professional, technically sound and user-friendly analytical documents, drawing upon an editor as needed for clarity and consistency.