**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTORS**

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| **PART I** | | |
| Title of Assignment | Individual Contractor – Transfer Project evaluation and research uptake specialist | |
| Section | Social Policy | |
| Location | Home based with potential field missions to ESAR Country Offices (travel permitting) | |
| Duration | 11.5 months | |
| Start date | **From:** 15/03/2021 | **To:** 28/02/2022 |

**Background and Justification**

**The Transfer Project (TP): Learning How Social Cash Transfers Work in Africa (**[**https://transfer.cpc.unc.edu/**](https://transfer.cpc.unc.edu/)**) is an innovative research and learning initiative that supports improved knowledge and practice on social cash transfers in sub Saharan Africa (SSA)**. The initiative undertakes impact evaluations of large-scale cash transfer programs in SSA, and creates mechanisms for regional learning and evidence exchange among policy makers, program implementers, and researchers. Established in 2008, the TP is led by UNICEF and FAO with the University of North Carolina as the international research partner. The TP is a trusted thought leader in the area of cash transfer research and innovation, providing technical assistance in the design, implementation and analysis of Government programmes across Africa while maintaining a commitment to build local research capacities on the continent.

**UNICEF’s Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO), based in Nairobi, provides technical assistance and oversight to UNICEF country offices in the 21 countries in the region**. The Social Policy and Research Section within the Regional Office is responsible for providing technical assistance and quality assurance in the areas of public finance for children, social protection and child poverty to Country Offices in the region. Given the large extent of UNICEF supported national cash transfer programmes in the region, ESARO has been an active partner in TP since its inception. Currently at least 7 COs have an impact evaluation either ongoing or planned, 4 COs are engaged in a gender-oriented research led by UNICEF Innocenti, and 4 COs are involved in a qualitative study on children also led by Innocenti. In addition, several COs have process evaluations or inclusion assessments planned for 2021. Most of these initiatives will either draw lessons from or feed into the Transfer Project initiative, in addition to establishing good practices for carry over to other country offices.

**The Transfer Project is currently adapting its engagement approach with the aim of continuing dialogue with policymakers, programme implementers, researchers and technical staff from UNICEF.** This includes development and facilitation of a series of webinars and learning events to be delivered online as travel restrictions continue to impede in-person events. Additionally, there is hope that a TP face-to-face conference will be possible to organize towards the end of 2021. The TP is committed to further developing local capacities, with an emphasis in supporting African research institutions to undertake rigorous impact evaluations of CT programmes while supporting African governments to utilize evidence and best practice to formulate and adapt social protection policy and programming.

UNICEF ESARO wishes to continue this strategic engagement with the Transfer Project, utilizing its technical expertise to facilitate research in the region while also ensuring that the diverse research portfolio in ESAR is showcased at an international level. As a result, with funding from the Transfer Project, the Social Policy and Research section is seeking a research professional with specific previous experience conducting research in sub-Saharan Africa to serve as an Evaluation and Research Uptake Specialist based in ESARO.

**Scope of Work**

**Goal and Objective**

Under the direct supervision of the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Regional Office (ESARO) Social Policy Specialist (Social Protection), the contractor will contribute to the social protection portfolio of the regional office by supporting efforts by country offices to create new evidence and leverage existing evidence on the effectiveness of social cash transfers.

Through this assignment, the contractor will support governments in generating and using the best available evidence on impact and operations to effectively finance and implement cash transfers and related social protection interventions. Ensuring that technical lessons from existing Transfer Project resources are well utilized in country while also ensuring that CO results contribute to the global evidence repository, housed at the Transfer Project. The contractor will also support ESARO to track ongoing research initiatives in COs while also identifying potential new opportunities, building relationships and networks with key partners external to UNICEF working in this field, including international financial institutions, other UN agencies, bilateral donors, civil society and professional groups and NGOs.

**Tasks and Deliverables**

1. Maintain an updated inventory of all government cash transfer and cash plus programs in the region with key information including coverage, benefit size, and other program operation parameters;
2. Maintain an updated inventory of cash transfer impact and operational evaluations undertaken or ongoing in the region, not limited to Transfer Project affiliated studies, including study design, sample sizes, objectives, and main results;
3. Prepare research briefs for country office (CO) staff and counterparts summarizing key impact and operational results from cash transfer studies, with clearly identified actionable implications;
4. Advise CO staff and counterparts on technical study design parameters for research on cash transfers and cash+ programs; provide written inputs to TORs; help assess consultant rosters or proposals for commissioning research;
5. Design and implement knowledge-building activities such as mini-conferences and remote webinars to facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity building for CO staff and counterparts around evidence generation and dissemination;
6. Support broader Transfer Project initiatives including the online webinar series and annual research conference;
7. Support broader UNICEF regional office initiatives around evidence generation and uptake in social protection and public finance for children.

The contractor is expected to work full-time for UNICEF ESARO for the duration of the contract.

1. **Work relationships:** The contractor will report to the Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF ESARO and will routinely liaise with Social Policy, Monitoring and Evaluation staff in Country Offices, their government partners, the UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti, Transfer Project colleagues and research institutions.
2. **Outputs/deliverables:** The individual contractor is expected to produce the outputs and be paid according to the table below:

| **Outputs** | **Payment amount** | **Deadline** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/04/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/05/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/06/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/07/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/08/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/09/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/10/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/11/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/12/2021 |
| Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report) | Monthly payment | 15/01/2022 |
| (i) Monthly progress report which includes details on:   * Technical support provided to ESAR CO and RO research initiatives * Transfer Project related activities * Guidelines and documents produced (to be provided in an annex to the report)   (ii) Final report | 1.5 monthly payment | 28/02/2022 |

**Payment Schedule**

Payment will be made on a monthly basis, upon submission of a short monthly summary report and invoice at the end of each month. Specific outputs will be provided as an annex to this report, in the estimated timeframe provided above. Payments will be made against the monthly invoice only after approval of deliverables by the contract manager.

**Desired competencies, technical background and experience**

The contractor should have the following profile:

**Qualification:**

* Advanced university degree (Masters) from an accredited academic institution, in a discipline related to social protection, human development, economics, public policy or other relevant field.

**Experience and competencies:**

* A minimum of 5 years of experience in research methods for social scientists or public health specialists, with at least one research project focused on sub-Saharan Africa, direct experience working with an Africa based research or academic institution is preferred.
* Strong understanding of impact evaluation concepts and approaches, preferably including design and implementation of representative impact evaluations and/or programme process evaluation of national social protection cash transfer programmes, preferably in sub-Saharan Africa.
* Strong understanding of social protection theories and interventions, especially cash transfers and administration in resource-poor settings.
* Experience in budget analysis, costing and developing investment cases an asset.
* Clearly demonstrated ability to conceptualize development issues and write high quality technical reports, analytical materials and guidelines.
* Proven ability to communicate and work in a multi-cultural environment and provide remote organizational support to government officials.
* Excellent writing and oral skills in English (fluency) required. Working knowledge of French (basic) and/or Portuguese (basic) would be an asset.

**Core Values:**

* Care
* Respect
* Integrity
* Trust
* Accountability

**Core Competencies**

* Builds and maintains partnerships
* Demonstrates self-awareness and ethical awareness
* Drive to achieve results for impact
* Innovates and embraces change
* Manages ambiguity and complexity
* Thinks and acts strategically
* Works collaboratively with others

**Administrative issues**

The contractor will work remotely with possible in-country travel within ESAR (travel restrictions allowing). Communication and coordination will be done via email, Skype or Zoom with an agreement reached between ESARO and the contractor must ensure a minimum 5 hour window is available for direct calls and meetings in respect of the time difference between ESAR and the contractor’s location. The contractor will provide his/her own computer and administrative support throughout the assignment, however a UNICEF email address may be issued to facilitate official communication between the contractor and COs.

*The contractor is expected to be home based with potential travel to up to 10 countries in ESAR depending on COVID-19 travel restrictions in 2021 (4-6 days in each) for which the UNICEF office would cover DSA and travel costs. Travel will be in economy class. If the Contractor is required to quarantine while traveling, UNICEF will pay for the quarantine if not organized by the host country.*

**Conditions**

As per UNICEF DFAM policy, payment is made against approved deliverables. No advance payment is allowed unless in exceptional circumstances against bank guarantee, subject to a maximum of 30 per cent of the total contract value in cases where advance purchases, for example for supplies or travel, may be necessary.

The candidate selected will be governed by and subject to UNICEF’s General Terms and Conditions for individual contracts.

**Risks**

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| Risk | Likelihood | Risk Mitigation |
| COs experience delays in research implementation in country | Moderate | Contractor will work with SP Specialists in country to overcome bottlenecks and identify appropriate research methodology adaptations to overcome delays, factoring in programmatic considerations first and foremost. |
| Travel restrictions do not allow for in-person work presence in Nairobi and/or missions to COs | Likely | The contractor must make arrangements to facilitate efficient remote work and reliable communication with ESARO and COs. It is expected that the contractor will agree to working hours that account for time differences between ESAR and their own location with at least 3 hours available daily for direct calls and meetings. Communication and coordination will be done via email, Skype or Zoom. It is expected that the contractor will provide his/her own computer and administrative support throughout the assignment. |
| Transfer Project annual research conference unable to take place due to travel restrictions | Moderate | Contractor will support organization and facilitation of alternative knowledge sharing activities as outlined in key tasks. |

**How to Apply**

Contractors are invited to submit an expression of interest through the UNICEF recruitment website. Applications must be submitted online by 9 March.

Expression of Interest must include:

1. Fully completed online profile or P11
2. Cover letter describing your qualifications and past experiences relevant to the assignment (maximum 2 pages) and a clear indication of the monthly fee in USD to complete the assignment. Please note that applications submitted without a monthly rate will not be considered. Travel should not be included in the application as these expenses will be accommodated for by UNICEF outside of this contract.
3. Curriculum vitae (CV) inclusive of names and contacts of three references. Please note that applications without references will not be considered.
4. One sample work from a relevant research project in SSA where the candidate played a key role in research design, implementation, data analysis and/or report writing (*shared via online link preferred*).

UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages all candidates, irrespective of gender, nationality, religious and ethnic backgrounds, including persons living with disabilities, 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 strict child safeguarding principles. All selected candidates will be expected to adhere to these standards and principles and will therefore undergo rigorous reference and background checks. Background checks will include the verification of academic credential(s) and employment history. Selected candidates may be required to provide additional information to conduct a background check.