

TERMS OF REFERENCE

SHORT TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT

Pacific Inclusive Education System Strengthening Technical Consultant

BACKGROUND

The Pacific region is one of the largest and most diverse regions of the world covering an area equivalent to 15% of the globe's surface. Many Pacific Island countries and territories share similar challenges and opportunities as small and remote island economies, with limited natural resources, narrowly-based economies, large distances from major markets, and vulnerability to external shocks; all of which can affect growth and have often led to a high degree of economic volatility. Pacific Island countries are also some of the most vulnerable in the world to the effects of climate change and natural disasters.

Despite good progress in the education sector, large numbers of children remain outside the education systems. Children with disabilities make up an important proportion of out-of-school children¹. It is estimated that less than 10% of children with disabilities in the Pacific region have access to any form of education².

In line with the Sustainable development goals to “leave no one behind” and to tackle the challenge of exclusion in the education sector in across the Pacific Island countries (PICs), stakeholders have come together to develop the Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Framework (PRIEF). PRIEF was developed in recognition of the need to address the educational needs of learners at most risk of exclusion, noting that one group of learners who are frequently excluded are those with disability or special needs, while others may include those who are marginalized due to geographical location, socio-economic status, gender, ethnic minorities and other potentially marginalized groups. It focuses on five key priorities: (i) Enabling policies & legislation for inclusive education; (ii) Raising awareness about inclusive education in schools and the wider community; (iii) Providing appropriate training and professional learning to enable leaders and teachers to implement effective inclusive practices; (iv) Strengthening partnerships between schools, parents and community members; and (v) Developing best practice pedagogy and curriculum for inclusive practices and accessibility. The PRIEF was endorsed by FEEdMM in 2021.

The Pacific Regional Education Framework 2018 - 2030 (PacREF) was adopted by the Pacific Forum Education Ministers in 2018, in recognition of the need for a transformative and sustainable regional education agenda that aligns with global development commitments, and addresses the education needs of the region. It also reaffirms Pacific Forum Leaders vision for a *Blue Pacific* grounded in collective action to address regional priorities such as education. PacREF promotes a human rights approach to education and seeks to empower Pacific islanders to fully enjoy, without barriers, the benefits of education. One early activity under PacREF was a Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Review, which covered 15 Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

At the FEEdMM in 2021, the PRIEF was endorsed, preliminary findings of the IE Review were shared, and the informal Pacific IE Taskforce that had been formed to oversee the review, was formalized and elevated to Ministerial level.

A 3-year Implementation Plan for PacREF is underway, and with ongoing implementation. In line with agreements at FEEdMM/PHES, there is an agreement that PHES will have IE as a standing agenda item, and that

¹ Draft Regional Report on Out-of-School Children in East Asia and the Pacific (2018)

² Pacific Disability Forum (PDF), 2018. *Pacific Disability Forum SDG-CRPD Monitoring Report*.

EQAP will integrate inclusion in the PacREF monitoring framework so implementation of inclusion through PacREF can be monitored by PHES.

UNICEF Pacific Education Programme has committed to continue to support programming in inclusive education in Pacific Island countries, including any regional follow-on to the Pacific Regional IE Review, as well as country-specific work. UNICEF's specific commitments under PacREF that relate to inclusive education are: Regional review of inclusive education policies and programmes and regional forum (PacRef LP 2.1.1); Development of Inclusive Education Policy, Strategies and implementation plans drawing on Pacific IE Review (PacRef LP 2.1.2). In addition, UNICEF is committed to integrating inclusion across our programme, including in other PacREF activities, working toward the aim that all regional efforts for education should hold inclusion at the core.

In this context, UNICEF needs to be able to provide high quality technical support on inclusive education that is well-grounded in Pacific contexts and systems, and fully integrated across the UNICEF programme, including in early childhood education, teaching & learning, policy & planning, and disaster risk reduction and emergency response.

OBJECTIVE / SCOPE OF WORK

The objective of this consultancy is to advance quality inclusive education programming in the Pacific.

The consultant is expected to provide technical advice to UNICEF and to Pacific Island countries in inclusive education, including in the development and review of policies, plans and programmes, including capacity building, focused specifically on inclusive education, as well as in the technical review from an inclusion perspective in other education policies, plans and programmes, and integration of inclusion in the same.

The consultant is expected to work with of the Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Taskforce for Pacific regional initiatives and to work closely with country focal points from each Ministry of Education in each country, and – in both cases – to make every effort to coordinate and align with the work of other partners in the sector, and particularly to guide on partnerships and engagement with Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs).

The expected work covers these broad technical areas, which guides the required deliverables and indicative activities as presented in the table below:

- **Policy and planning / Inclusive education:** This work includes the technical support to Ministries of Education in situational analysis of inclusive education systems; development, review and finalization of inclusive education policies and plans; and the preparation for any consultations, events and stakeholder engagement as required in these processes.
- **Teaching and learning / Inclusive education:** This work includes the technical support to Ministries of Education to the development, implementation and review of inclusive education teacher training, teaching & learning materials, and parent/community engagement materials and approaches.
- **Cross-sectoral support to inclusion in parent engagement / ECD:** This work includes technical support to Ministries of Education in collaboration with other relevant Ministries and departments to strengthen cross-sectoral support to families, parents and children.
- **Technical review and inputs to other Education policies, plans and programmes:** This work includes the technical review of other policies, plans and programmes that are not specifically focused on inclusive education, but that need to integrate adequate attention and strategies on inclusion. This may benefit from occasional participation in UNICEF Education team meetings.

The consultant would be requested to provide technical reviews and feedback from an inclusion perspective to studies, concept notes and other associated documents.

Because of the evolving nature of the Education Programme, it is critical that technical support on inclusive education can be provided on an ongoing and as-needed basis. A full annual workplan will be developed which will be updated on a quarterly basis in agreement between UNICEF and the consultant, outlining expected process, milestones, timeframes and estimated working days. This workplan will be established on the basis of existing commitments made by UNICEF to support inclusion in the Pacific at the start of the contract. As 2024-2025 workplans are established in early 2024 and finalized by March 2024, this will inform the development of the workplan and all subsequent workplans. The consultant can invoice on the basis of approved deliverables or milestones, based on agreed working days spent on the same, at a maximum on a monthly basis.

Details presented in the below table are indicative set of work as per existing partnership with countries.

ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINES, PLUS PAYMENT SCHEDULE PER DELIVERABLE			
INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES	ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE	PAYMENT (%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide follow up support to finalize the Policy and implementation plan following its review by the Ministry and other key stakeholders (Niue, others as relevant) • Strengthening disability identification and integration of disability data in EMIS' or relevant data collection systems (to be determined). • Dissemination of Pacific IE report workshop and programming for inclusive education to occur in 2024, to define a coherent and coordinated way forward for development and implementation of IE programming, with the participation of stakeholders including representatives of OPDs (FSM, others as relevant). • Support the technical design and preparation of Pacific Regional IE Forum (regional). This meeting is expected to highlight regional issues that should be built into the next PacREF phase; including relevant linkages to PRIEF in PacREF (regional) 	<p>Deliverable 1: Policy and planning / Inclusive education</p> <p>Technical support provided to Ministries of Education in situational analysis of inclusive education systems; development, review and finalization of inclusive education policies and plans; and the preparation for any consultations, events and stakeholder engagement as required in these processes.</p>		30%-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development, pilot, review and finalise IE teacher training, potentially including online options (Solomon Islands) • Developing the resources to support MEHRD with guidance to combine the use of the Manual and Module for Inclusive Education; Ongoing support for ECD / parenting materials (Solomon Islands) • Support MEHRD with disability in SIEMIS (Solomon Islands) • Review current resources, including assistive technologies, and guide on development/procurement as well as guidance/procedures for implementation (Solomon Islands and relevant countries) 	<p>Deliverable 2: Teaching and learning / Inclusive education</p> <p>Technical guidance documents and related resources, review and revisions of inclusive education teacher training packages, teaching & learning materials, including providing training and</p>		30%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Inclusive education ECE training packages for 4 states of FSM and support implementation and monitoring. Inclusive ECE training – to occur in four states. 	<p>facilitation as organized by the Ministries, and parent/community engagement materials and approaches.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and strengthening of cross-sectoral early identification and intervention for pre-school aged children with disabilities (expected one country – to be determined). Technical support to development of media/resources to support parent engagement in student learning at home (Solomon Islands) Technical reviews of and contributions to parent engagement and parenting programmes (as needed) Support Regional ECE for children with disabilities: the Ubuntu like materials “getting to know cerebral palsy” program, and the ECD research conducted in Fiji by the Nossal Institute, develop a concept note outlining how lessons from FHO’s “Stepping Stones” inclusive Early Intervention program could inform scaling up of this program in Fiji and its introduction in other countries of the Pacific. 	<p>Deliverable 3:</p> <p>Cross-sectoral support to inclusion in parent engagement / ECD</p> <p>Availability of guidance and materials and supporting resources for strengthening of cross-sectoral early identification and intervention for pre-school aged children with disabilities to support families, parents and children.</p>		20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical review and integration of inclusion in Education policies and plans (e.g. Education Sector Analysis and Plan) Technical review and integration of inclusion in Education programming (e.g. ECE curriculum teacher training) Technical review and integration of inclusion in Education research Design and provide capacity building on inclusive education to UNICEF Pacific Education team (regional) 	<p>Deliverable 4:</p> <p>Technical review and inputs to other Education policies, plans and programmes:</p> <p>Detailed feedback and proposed new additions plus a summary report of the technical review of other policies, plans and programmes that are not specifically focused on inclusive education, but that need to integrate adequate attention and strategies on inclusion.</p>		20%
			TOTAL 100%

QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

Bachelors Masters PhD Other

Advanced University degree (Master’s Degree or higher) in Education or a related field is required.

Qualifications:

- Minimum 10 years of proven experience and expertise in inclusive education, policy and practice is required
- Substantial experience in research and analysis will be an asset
- Demonstrated experience working with Ministries of Education and development partners
- Knowledge of Pacific cultures and education systems, including Pacific regional institutions, partners, frameworks and partnerships
- Pacific experience, knowledge and culture are added advantages

- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to exclusion on the basis of gender, disability, poverty, etc.
- Proven ability to produce high quality, user-friendly analyses and presentations that are accessible and engaging to a wide variety of audiences

Competencies:

- High level interpersonal and relationship-building skills
- Ability to communicate effectively with persons of various cultures and disciplines
- Ability to identify risks and to develop strategies to mitigate them
- Ability to determine and review priorities and meet deadlines
- Management & leadership skills including coaching and mentoring
- Diplomatic skills to liaise with counterparts and different stakeholders
- Good analytical, negotiating, and advocacy skills

CONDITIONS OF WORK AND CLARIFICATION ON SUPERVISION

The consultant will be supervised on a day-to-day basis by the nominated official in each national education department or ministry, with oversight by UNICEF field office teams, and technical guidance and supervision, including contract management, provided by the Education Specialist and the UNICEF Pacific Chief of Education. Final approval of deliverables for payment will be done by the UNICEF Pacific Chief of Education based on advice from the national education department/ministry.

The consultant is expected to travel to countries for in-person work: Solomon Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji and others as expected by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education (estimated days of 50 days during 18 months of the contract, for the work described in the Scope of Work section), including in-person engagement in key meetings and consultations, and may work remotely the remainder of the time. When working remotely, the consultant is expected to be available for discussions as required during working hours of these 6 countries listed above. All costs associated with travel to and within the country are to be budgeted in the financial proposal for inclusion in the total contract value.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- 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.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible to ensure that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts. UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant/ contractor.

- Consultant/Contractor will be required to complete mandatory online courses (e.g. Ethics, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Security) upon receipt of offer and before the signature of contract.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

- This vacancy is for an individual consultant only. Candidates are requested to submit a brief technical proposal and CV, with any indication of sub-contracted expertise (which would remain the responsibility of the contracted consultant).
- Candidates are asked to submit a **separate financial offer** along with your application. The financial proposal should be a **lump sum amount for all the deliverables** and should show a break down for the following:
 - Monthly / Daily fees– based on the deliverables in the Terms of Reference above
 - Travel (economy air ticket where applicable to take up assignment and field mission travel)
 - Living allowance: where travel is required
 - Miscellaneous: to cover visa, health insurance (including medical evacuation for international consultants), communications, and other costs.