

## TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS

<b>Title: Consultant for the development of a National Early Childhood Development Policy for Suriname</b>	<b>Funding Code</b>	<b>Type of engagement</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Consultant	<b>Duty Station:</b>  <b>Paramaribo Suriname</b>
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**Purpose of Activity/Assignment:**

The objective of this consultancy is to develop a national ECD Policy for Suriname for an integrated approach to ECD and alignment of sectoral policies and national development priorities to ensure that all children achieve their full potential.

The consultant will be expected to design and implement an appropriate consultative process for policy development, in accordance with international renowned guidelines for ECD policy development to ensure a participative process and endorsement of the policy across sectors.

**Background**

There is increasing evidence that participation in high quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes has significant impact on a child's holistic development, strengthens capacity to be successful across the life course, and is a key contributor to the achievement of sustainable development. The scientific research focusing on early brain development confirms that the quality of the experiences within the first 1,000 days of a child's life is particularly critical because it is within this period that the brain develops most rapidly, with vital changes occurring in all domains - language and communication, social skills and emotional control, recognition and understanding of symbols in the environment and the development of attitudes and aptitudes to learning and living. It is understood that the brain of a young child needs multiple experiences to develop and research on ECD emphasizes a collaborative approach to early childhood development which includes critical inputs from multiple sectors to support the development of boys and girls, 0-8 years old.

Children in Suriname have slightly improved in the four ECD domains based on the national Early Childhood Development Index (ECDI) from 71% (2010) to 77% (2018). For girls this is about 10 points higher than for boys. The ECDI is 82% for urban and 62% for the interior. In the domains of literacy (44%) and social-emotional development (68%) 3-4-year-olds were least on track, while their development on the physical and learning domains scored 98% and 96% respectively. Access to play and learning materials for children under the age of 5 is 65% for toys at home, while access to books is significantly less at 26%. 46% of children aged 3-4 years nationally attended an Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. Importantly, children who were enrolled in an ECE program were more likely to be on track in the ECD domains than children who did not follow an ECE program. Although attendance rates for ECE are higher in urban areas than in rural areas, most children (58%) who do not attend ECE are in fact urban. The COVID-19 pandemic has scaled back efforts in ECD due to closure of pre-schools, day-cares and challenges across sectors providing ECD services.

UNICEF Suriname supports the government to fulfil their commitments to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) so that every child can survive, thrive and develop to reach his or her full potential. The aim is to ensure that all girls and boys (0-8 years) especially the most disadvantaged, which includes children living in poverty, children with developmental delays and disabilities, children impacted by migration or natural hazards and emergencies etc. have every opportunity to improve their educational and developmental outcomes by accessing equitable, safe and inclusive experiences across the lifecycle, including in emergencies. Emphasis is being placed on the provision of equitable and inclusive early childhood programmes and services especially for the most vulnerable girls and boys;

promotion of integrated ECD in safe and interactive environments for all children; reducing and preventing violence and adverse experiences in homes, childcare institutions, schools and in community spaces; strengthening the institutional capacity for planning, monitoring and management of data.

Acknowledging the efforts from multiple sectors, past and current, it's critical to ensure alignment of those efforts and to fill the gaps, through developing a national ECD policy as a first step towards expanding and improving integrated ECD services for children and their families.

The Ministry of Education Science and Culture is leading the coordination of this policy development process, and UNICEF Suriname is supporting this process. For this purpose, UNICEF is seeking to contract a consultant to guide this process and develop a national ECD policy.

#### **Scope of Work:**

The consultant is expected to work under the technical guidance coordination of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and UNICEF Suriname, supported by a key intersectoral working group, including the Ministry of Finance that will be established.

Under the contractual supervision of UNICEF Suriname, the Consultant will perform the following tasks:

#### **Inception report**

- Development of a workplan, methodology and tools. The consultant is expected to make an inventory of relevant ECD documents, explore good practices for policy development, conduct a stakeholder mapping and develop a workplan, methodology and tools for consultations and policy development, as well as a draft outline of the National ECD Policy.

#### **Situation analysis: Desk review, consultations with stakeholders across sectors**

- Complete a comprehensive desk review of relevant key documents from among others the Education, Health, Social Policy, Child Protection sector, etc. in relation to existing (standalone) ECD policies and strategies, programs, services, legislation, budgets and child development status.
- Conduct consultations (individual, groups, workshop format depending on the target group) with inter-sectoral stakeholders in the Public, Private and NGO sector to further assess the current situation to identify barriers and bottlenecks, existing strategies, identify key areas of progress, ECD services, quality of services and gaps, priorities and needs in all ECD areas by age levels, including children with special needs and cross-cutting subjects e.g., capacity building.
  - The consultations need to consider national level (to include main actors), district level and where applicable community-level input.
  - Stakeholder consultations need to include service providers from the ECD landscape as well as financing sector and development partners.
- Develop a comprehensive situation analysis based on the desk review and consultations concerning early childhood development of children, taking a life course and multi-sectorial perspective into account:
  - acknowledging nuances from geographical perspective, minority and other deprived target groups.
  - mapping of existing ECD services, policies and strategies from various sectors related to ECD and gaps in service package and cross-sectoral alignment against children's needs.
  - being qualitative and quantitative in nature.
  - applying the nurturing care framework for early childhood development as a lens.

### Policy development

Building forth on lessons learned from the situation analysis, the planning process is initiated to identify sectoral and joint policy priorities, and areas to improve coordination, collaboration and integration:

- Facilitate a policy development workshop with key stakeholders, present findings of the situation analysis and gather input from stakeholders for the national ECD policy, including the advocacy and mobilization of resources in terms of e.g., human, financial, material resources.
- Develop a draft National ECD Policy, including ECD service package ensuring equity principles to reach those children most in need with the services they need for optimal development. Ensuring optimal policy alignment between the components of nurturing care (good health, adequate nutrition, responsive caregiving, security and safety, and opportunities for early learning) for young children to develop to their full potential.
- Investment plan providing general budgetary requirements to meet the policy goals, actual and potential sources of finance and mobilization efforts required
- Facilitate a consultation session with key-stakeholders gather feedback, review and finalize the ECD policy.

### Child Safeguarding

Is this project/assignment considered as “[Elevated Risk Role](#)” from a child safeguarding perspective?

☐ YES ☒ NO If YES, check all that apply:

**Direct contact role** ☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

**Child data role** ☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

<b>Budget Year:</b>	<b>Requesting Section/Issuing Office:</b>	<b>Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff:</b>
<b>Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, please justify:		
<b>Consultant sourcing:</b>		<b>Request for:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New SSA – Individual Contract

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment
<b>Competitive Selection:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advertisement <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Roster		
<b>Single Source Selection</b> <input type="checkbox"/> (Emergency - Director's approval)		
<b>If Extension, Justification for extension:</b>		
<b>Supervisor:</b> E.F. Tjon-A-Loi	<b>Start Date:</b> January 10 <sup>th</sup> 2023	<b>End Date:</b> May 30 <sup>th</sup> 2023

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline	Estimated Budget
Inception Report- including workplan, timeline, methodology, Tools for consultations, policy development workshops, and draft national ECD policy outline.	Inception report	January 30 <sup>th</sup>	15%
Desk review, consultations with stakeholders across sectors and workshop	Situation analysis report consisting of the status of children's early childhood development, an assessment of children's needs, analysis of current ECD services and gaps resources for ECD, and review of policies, plans and legal review	February 28 <sup>th</sup>	20%
Policy development workshop and developing National ECD policy	Draft national ECD policy	March 30 <sup>th</sup>	35%
Consultations on the draft policy and finalization	Consultation findings and final National ECD policy	May 15 <sup>th</sup>	30%

<b>Estimated Consultancy fee</b>			
Travel International (if applicable)	NA		
Travel Local (please include travel plan)	Dependent on detailed workplan for consultations. Logistical costs to remote areas excluded from the consultancy contract. To be covered separately if needed. Operational costs for facilitating consultations and workshops excluded from the contract.		
DSA (if applicable)	NA		
<b>Total estimated consultancy costs<sup>i</sup></b>			
<b>Minimum Qualifications required*:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other  Enter Disciplines: An Advanced University Degree in Social Sciences, (Public) Health, Early Childhood Development, Education, Project Management or any related field	<b>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required*:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 8 years of professional experience.</li> <li>• The Consultant is expected to have research capacity and high level analytical and synthesis skills, together with personal and professional ethics and integrity, and basic skills in human rights and gender equity analysis.</li> <li>• Experience in Policy Development and the development of implementation systems and processes.</li> <li>• Demonstrated excellence in Dutch and English; strong verbal and interpersonal communications skills (preferably Dutch speaking).</li> <li>• Ability to work both independently and collaboratively essential, with a clean record for timely delivery of high- quality products;</li> <li>• Experience in programme-based budgeting.</li> <li>• Familiarity with the Surinamese Community and understanding of the political, cultural and socio-economic conditions of Suriname</li> </ul>		
*Minimum requirements to consider candidates for competitive process	*Listed requirements will be used for technical evaluation in the competitive process		
<b>Evaluation Criteria (This will be used for the <a href="#">Selection Report</a> (for clarification see <a href="#">Guidance</a>))</b>			
A) Technical Evaluation (e.g. maximum 75 Points)		B) Financial Proposal (e.g. maximum of 25 Points)	

**Please note that candidates are required to submit technical and financial proposals in order to advance to the next stage of the recruitment process**

**Administrative details:**

Visa assistance required: ☐

☒ Home Based ☐ Office Based:

**If office based**, seating arrangement identified: ☐

IT and Communication equipment required: ☐

Internet access required: ☐

<sup>1</sup> Costs indicated are estimated. Final rate shall follow the “best value for money” principle, i.e., achieving the desired outcome at the lowest possible fee. Consultants will be asked to stipulate all-inclusive fees, including lump sum travel and subsistence costs, as applicable.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant

**Text to be added to all TORs:**

Individuals engaged under a consultancy 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. Consultants 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 consultant 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 consultant 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. The vaccine mandate, 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.

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. Successful individuals will be required to produce the following:

- Certificate of good health
  - Proof of Health Insurance
  - Statement of good standing
  - Designation of beneficiary form
  - Mandatory training certificates from UNICEF's e-learning platform (prior to commencement of the Assignment)
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