**UNICEF Gulf Area Office**

**Terms of Reference**

**Consultancy– Senior Researcher for a Situational Analysis of Children**

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| **Location and Duration** | **Location**: Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates/Remote  **Estimated Start Date and duration**: April 2021 to September 2021  **Reporting to:** Saji Thomas, Chief Child Protection, UNICEF GAO |
| **Background** | The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is now the second largest Gulf economy after Saudi Arabia. The State has ensured a better quality of life for its people, through diverse development policies and processes launched in all areas of life leading to rapid economic and social growth in all sectors. To translate economic assets into social benefits for the people, the political leadership has invested its resources in developing the country’s human capital resulting in a higher standard of living for society. Where required, positive legislation, policies and strategies were adopted.  United Arab Emirates’ Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2019 is 0.890— which put the country in the very high human development category—positioning it at 31 out of 189 countries and territories. Between 1990 and 2019, United Arab Emirates’ HDI value increased from 0.723 to 0.890, an increase of 23.1 percent. United Arab Emirates’ life expectancy at birth increased by 6.0 years, mean years of schooling increased by 6.5 years and expected years of schooling increased by 4.0 years. United Arab Emirates’ GNI per capita decreased by about 34.1 percent between 1990 and 2019.  United Arab Emirates’ 2019 HDI of 0.890 is below the average of 0.898 for countries in the very high human development group and above the average of 0.705 for countries in Arab States.  The national development framework for the UAE comprises Vision 2021[[1]](#footnote-1) and sectoral strategies and plans at the Federal and Emirate levels. Vision 2021 offers an ambitious guide for the UAE’s progress toward a productive and fulfilling future for citizens and residents in a competitive and resilient economy, ‘fuelled by a vigorous entrepreneurial spirit’[[2]](#footnote-2). The overall aim is to sustain the transition from hydrocarbon-based wealth to greater economic diversification and sustainable development, with a focus on cohesive families, strong and active communities, enriched human capital, and a knowledge-based economy. For example, a key target of Vision 2021 is to increase the country’s HDI rank from 31st to amongst the top 10 out of 188 countries and territories[[3]](#footnote-3).  The UAE is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1997) , the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 2004), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, 2010), and the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocol to stop trafficking in persons, especially women and children (Trafficking Protocol, 2009). In addition, the UAE has adopted the 2030 United Nation’s Agenda for Sustainable Development.  United Arab Emirates has strong and solid achievements in the field of child rights. In 2017, the UAE launched two national strategies, the National Strategy for Motherhood and Childhood, and the Strategic Plan for children with disabilities (CWD) after the Cabinet office of UAE adopted them in 22 March 2017. Both strategies were prepared by Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood (SCMC) and UNICEF Gulf Area Office (GAO). The development of the strategies had been informed by international standards including the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, they are fully aligned with UAE’s VISION 2021 and with the UAE Child Rights Law “Wadeema Law”.  The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood (SCMC) and UNICEF Gulf Area Office (GAO) published last Situation Analysis of Children in 2010. Following which, GAO conducted snapshot analysis in 2018 for internal use during the development of new program document (2019-2023).  To further strengthen anlysis of the situation of chidren in the country in 2020, SCMC decided to conduct a new SitAn. UNICEF will provide technical support in conducting the research. A senior researcher is being brought on board to support the SCMC and partners to conduct the study. The SitAn will be undertaken by a local institution. |
| **Objectives& Purpose** | The purpose of the consultancy is to provide technical support on the SitAn process, including conceptualization, refining the scope, development of tools and consolidating the final report and related advocacy documents.  The SitAn and its asscoated advocacy documents would inform policy, programmes, build partnerships and mobilize resources for children. |
| **Description of the assignment** | **The Approach**  Central to the analysis of the situation of girls and boys in UAE is the human rights-based approach. The adoption of a rights-based approach to children’s concerns represents a qualitative shift from the provision of children’s basic needs to the adoption of internationally recognized child rights which States pledge to respect, protect and fulfil. This shift, however, is not limited to mere State obligations to respect and guarantee a list of children’s rights. It is vital to realize that the CRC represents a particular vision of comprehensive child rights.  There are three principles of a rights–based approach applicable for this study:  *Universal:* Every child is entitled to enjoy his or her rights by virtue of being human.  *Indivisible:* All rights have equal status and cannot be ranked, a priority, in a hierarchical order. This differs from the actual realization of rights; as some rights can be obtained immediately (i.e. right to name) while other rights require progressive process to be realized (i.e. right to protection from economic exploitation). This is not based on any kind of prioritizing; it is based on the nature of rights.  *Interdependent:* The realization of one right often depends on the realization of other rights. For example, achieving universal good quality education for children can prevent them from economic exploitation. This requires more comprehensive or holistic approaches.  The normative reference framework is based on first and foremost the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and linking them to other relevant conventions or commitments such as International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions, UNESCO’s Education for All and various human rights Conventions and Covenants[[4]](#footnote-4). The clusters of rights of the CRC and CEDAW, the 17 SDGs as well as national development priorities that will help organize the various types of analysis.  The Situation Analysis will adopt an integrated, cross-sectoral approach that takes a holistic view of the child. A life cycle approach from birth to adolescence (0-5, 6-12, 13-17) will be used to undertake the analysis of the key issues affecting children aged 0-18 and mothers. The Situation Analysis will address all girls and boys in UAE but will pay particular attention to the most vulnerable groups. CRC considers the family “the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children (which) should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community”, that means SitAn will look to family from this perspective especially that CRC has specific articles devoted to family support.  The gender roles will be incorporated as an analytical approach in the Situation Analysis to highlight gender disparities.  **Specific Thematic focus**  The SitAn while providing an overview of the overall child rights situation in the country will also have a focus on specific issues. They include Early Childhood Development, Child protection, Data and evidence for chidren, youth and public financing for children. Advocacy briefs/working papers will be produced on each of these issues.  **Analysis**  The following key steps will ground the analytical process:   1. *Institutional systems analysis* of the sectors, their systems and services as well as the social policy environment that shapes them. How the social sector systems work or do not work for children. The more specific areas and models to be analyzed within each sector will be determined during a conceptualization phase. 2. *The Causal analysis* will examine the causes (immediate, underlying and structural) of deficits children’s rights, using a well-defined conceptual framework (see Figure 1 below). This analysis will probe beyond the immediate causes of the non-fulfillment of children's rights to determine the underlying causes and structural issues, and to identify bottlenecks and barriers related to factors in the provision and use of essential interventions and services for children. 3. *Role Pattern Analysis* which examines the claim duty relationships of claim holders and duty bearers. 4. *Capacity gap analysis* which examines the capacity of the individual and institutional duty bearers and claim holders responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling children’s rights 5. Validation analysis to build stakeholder commitment and to optimise its use in influencing dialogue towards realisation of children and women rights.   Principles underpinning and framing the analysis  • Child rights and equity is at the center of the analysis. The situation analysis puts child rights at the core of the framework. It provides an understanding of how much child rights have progressed and why, and looks at areas where progress is slow or weak, identifies the barriers and how to overcome them.  • The realization of child rights and the SDGs are mutually reinforcing. The SDGs is universal with both developed and developing countries committed to achieve the goals and targets. More importantly, the SDG’s follow the principle of “Leave No One Behind” which reinforce UNICEF’s mission to reach every child in any country typology.  • The analysis is context-specific, identifies challenges and opportunities and is forward-looking. The intersection of these three components should provide a causality analysis of child rights.  **Key Questions for a Rights-based, Equity-focused SitAn[[5]](#footnote-5)**  A rights-based, equity-focused SitAn should seek to respond to the following questions, either through direct consideration, or through reference to other documents in which these are adequately addressed:  **Country overview (scene setting)**  Includes demographic profile; political economy and governance; public finance; gender profile; drivers of inequities; country assessment of essential products, markets and supply chains for children   * How does the broader country context contribute to the rights and the well-being of children and young people? Conversely, what macro factors exacerbate inequities? What innovative solutions are accelerating inclusive development? * How are institutions – federal/ local, private, public, community, etc. – systematically achieving their obligations on inclusive services and enabling opportunities for children and young people?   **Child rights and wellbeing: progress and inequities**   * What progress has been made in achieving children’s rights and well-being across relevant age groups, such as neonatals, children under 5 years, young children, older children and adolescents, as defined within the national context, literature and evidence? * Has progress been unequal? How large or deep are the deprivations faced by marginalized groups, such as those living in poverty, children with disabilities, among others? Who are the groups left behind, where and why? How resilient are children to shocks and stressors?   **Causes, challenges and risks**   * What specific factors have contributed to the realization of child rights and well-being? * What are the top factors, including risks (prioritization is key here), that prevent the realization of child rights and well-being? * What are the key factors that drive inequities in the realization of child rights and well-being? How are children engaged as active agents in decisions? * Do children and young people, especially the most vulnerable, enjoy their rights to (available, access, use, adequate and effective) coverage of commodities, services and opportunities?   **Global and regional issues**   * What are the global and regional issues that impact child rights and well-being? Has there been country progress in addressing the concluding observations of the periodic reports of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and related human rights treaties? How are cross-border issues and openings (migrations, trafficking, digitalization, etc.) being addressed/harnessed at scale? * How does the realization of child rights and well-being contribute towards the achievement of the SDGs in the country, and addressing emerging issues?   **SitAn Focus:**  Although SitAn can present an overview of children’s situation, the focus is on providing an in-depth analysis for specific issues that pose a fundamental challenge to ensuring children's rights in UAE. Some key issue include:   * Improving learning outcomes; * Early childhood development * Developing skills of children and adolescents; * Advancing adolescent health and Mental health services; * Ending violence against children in the home; * Mechanisms for financing education for non-nationals   **Modality of Work:**   1. **The SitAn Steering Committee**: A policy level inter-sectoral steering committee should be accountable for:  * Approval and overall monitoring of the work plan for the development of the Situation Analysis; * Early identification and filling of specific critical capacity needs for the entire process; * Formation and evaluation of the performance of Working Groups (covering different aspects of the situation analysis), their specific ToRs and deadlines, including clear deliverables and reporting hierarchy and responsibilities. * Full participation in all key milestone events in the work plan including decision on the work, the Conceptual Framework, validation of the final draft.  1. **Key stakeholders to the SitAn will include:**  * Key ministries and government agencies at the federal and local levels; * Federal National Council * Federal and Local Statistics Centers * Policy analysis, research and development institutions * The UN, both the UNRC ‘s office and other key UN agencies * The media * Relevant civil society organizations, including NGOs, professional associations, and other social partners * Children and young persons  1. **Team of consultants:**  * Shaikha Fatma Research Center at UAE University; * Individual experts; * A team leader   **Tasks and Deliverables**  The anticipated duration for the entire process is 6 months, between April to September 2021 |
| **Deliverables/Key Tasks** | Under the supervision of the Chief Child Protection in GAO and in cooperation and coordination with Sheikha Fatima Research Center for Childhood and Motherhood, SCMC, and the team leader, the consultant will be responsible for the following based on the Approach provided above:   1. Review all relevant data sources and prepare a SitAn inception report which summarises (i) methodology; (ii) availability of data sources, clustered by thematic focus areas; (iii) information gap analysis; and, (iv) schedule of activities…etc.   **Deliverable1: Draft inception report (May 15, 2021)**  **Deliverable2: Final inception report (June 5, 2021)**   1. Conduct various analyses and producing research papers, according to methodology agreed in conceptual and analysis framework   **Deliverable3: Draft SitAn report and background papers (July 15, 2021)**   1. Participate and Contribute to the validation workshops of the situation analysis findings through participatory causality analysis, role pattern analysis and capacity gap analysis with a cross section of stakeholders through consultation processes (at least 3 workshops)   **Deliverable4: Workshop validation reports (August 01, 2021)**   1. Compile and Producte the final draft report of the situation analysis report according to an agreed format   **Deliverable5: Final SitAn Report and Summary Report (September 25, 2021)** |
| **Qualification requirements** | The Senior Researcher is expected to have:   * Advanced degree in the social sciences (sociology, anthropology, development studies), Economics/Statistics or related fields relevant for the assignment; * At least 10years of relevant professional experience in research; * Institutional knowledge of the UN and UNICEF; * Excellent facilitation and coordination skills; * Knowledge and Demonstrated experience with Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP); * Sound understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). * Proven experience in writing analytical papers on children’s issues; * Familiarity with UAE’s current national development priorities and challenges; * Fluency in English and Arabic. |
| * + **Payment Schedule** | * + To be developed as part of the contracting process. A template for discussion at contracting  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **1** | Final Inception Report | **30%** | | **2** | First draft of the Situation Analysis Report | **30%** | | **3** | Final SitAn report and a PowerPoint slide deck | **40%** | |
| * + **Evaluation of Proposal** | The proposal will be evaluated as follows:   * **Technical proposal {70%} –** this will review prior professional and relevant experience to carry out the assignment. * **Financial proposal {30%} –** this will be reviewed separately and should include all the costs that will be incurred to successfully compete the assignment. |

1. United Arab Emirates, Vision 2021, United in Ambition and Determination [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UAE, Vision 2021, Ibid. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. UAE, National Agenda-UAE Vision 2021. Summary of Targets. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. These include also the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. UNICEF, CORE GUIDANCE: NEW GENERATION SITUATION ANALYSIS, May 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)