

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### SHORT TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Continuous Professional Development (CPD) strategy for Kiribati

### BACKGROUND

Kiribati's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Act 2017 provides the framework for the regulation of the provision and operation of early childhood care and education to children from 3 years old to under 6 years old, including the approval of ECCE providers, and minimum standards for preschool teachers and ECCE premises. The enactment of the act in 2017 and establishment of regulations in 2020 expanded support for ECCE subsector in Kiribati, including payment for the salary of all registered ECCE teachers, development of Kiribati Quality Standards (KQS) for ECCE centres as well a development and launch of first-ever ECCE curriculum.

Kiribati is currently finalizing the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2024-2027. A systematic education sector analysis inclusive of ECCE subsector was conducted to inform the priorities under ESSP, building on the recognition that delivering quality ECCE at scale requires comprehensive attention to ECCE, rather than viewing it as an 'add-on service'. One of the critical areas within the broader ECCE subsector in Kiribati is the ECCE workforce development. Some of the key challenges that the Ministry of Education (MoE) has identified in the area of ECCE workforce are as follows:

- No Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes for ECCE teachers exist apart from ad-hoc in-service teacher training .
- Majority of teachers currently teaching at ECCE centres have only minimum qualifications such as certificate of attending a few-week ECCE course and first aid certificate.
- Teachers do not receive enough support on working with children with special educational needs.
- Teacher capacities to design and facilitate student-led learning in partnership with parents have not been supported or developed.
- In addition, there is no clear definition of staff qualification and competency profiles appropriate for ECCE (including aligned job descriptions)
- There is no system in place to carry out performance evaluation of teacher, including no mechanisms for incentives and career pathways.

While MOE identifies all the above mentioned challenges as critical, a critical challenge that they plan to prioritize is inadequate provision of CPD opportunities for ECCE teachers. CPD is the lifelong process of ongoing training and professional development of teachers to deepen knowledge, improving skills and competencies. CPD can take place with different modalities such as learning contents and pedagogical knowledge through in-person and online courses, conducting action research, consulting with peers, joining professional learning communities, conducting lesson studies, improving classroom practices through reflective practices supported by mentors.

The purpose of the consultancy is to support MoE in Kiribati to lead development of a feasible, contextually-relevant and sustainable ECCE CPD strategy, inclusive of mentoring and technical support mechanisms, and a costed operational plan with M&E framework. The strategy will focus on addressing existing gaps in CPD including strengthening various professional development opportunities, mentoring and supportive supervision, and also build on linkages and synergies with on-going and planned interventions on pre-service teacher training programmes in Kiribati.

### OBJECTIVES/SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work includes development of a contextually relevant ECCE CPD strategy which is inclusive of mentoring and technical support mechanisms through a robust consultative process under the leadership of MOE, ensuring the

strategy will be applicable in most remote and vulnerable contexts within Kiribati. In order to ensure its relevance, the strategy should be flexible with scope to be adapted in various contexts within Kiribati, thus accounting for the diversities within the country. As described above, the ministry has decided to focus on a key pillar within the workforce strategy which is continuous professional development of teachers inclusive of mentoring and technical support. However, the strategy must link to the ongoing and planned work on pre-service training of ECCE teachers which is being supported through separate funding, and in collaboration with USP, KTC and KIT. In harmonization with the broader education sector, the strategy will comprise of these key pillars and a costed operational plan to implement each of these pillars. The specific scope of work includes the following:

**1. Inception report inclusive of desk review and inception consultations:**

- a. Review existing relevant documents from Kiribati which will include existing Education Act, ECCE Act and regulations, new ECCE curriculum framework and teachers' guide, Kiribati Quality Standards, ESSP, national conditions of service, the national teachers' service standards framework, existing national standards for teachers, service conditions, national development plans including KV20 and Kiribati Development Plan, good practices, TES statements, Kiribati specific findings from Pacific regional early childhood education status update, existing workforce strategy from other Pacific and Asian countries, exiting CPD policy and accreditation system for primary and secondary teachers in Kiribati, and assess the current continuous professional development mechanism including approaches and models used (cluster based, centre based, etc.), existing and planned interventions in pre-service programmes for ECCE teachers, existing ways of technical support and mentoring being used and all other related documents. This should include all Pacific regional resources on ECE leadership, teaching and quality, and any Kiribati-specific resources for ECCE teaching led by any partner.
- b. Produce a synthesis report reflecting a synthesis of all documents, identifying common trends, variations, good practices, challenges and potential gaps. Based on the review of literature, develop a draft methodology and workplan for the consultancy. The methodology should clearly outline how each pillar of the CPD strategy which includes mentoring and technical support mechanisms will be developed, validated and finalized. The methodology will also clarify how a costed operational plan will be developed to implement these two pillars.
- c. Apart from the review of literature, facilitate consultations with key Government officers, departments, teacher training institutes, schools, ECCE centres, teachers and relevant partners to listen and learn the key requirements for ECCE workforce in Kiribati.
- d. Map existing and review pre-service training curricula and existing in-service training programmes and competency expectations for ECCE teachers as reflected in all documents and consultations, and identify areas of complementarity and gaps.
- e. Undertake observations at ECCE centres using existing classroom observation tools developed by ECCE curriculum TWG or TEACH tool for ECE and hold interviews with ECCE teachers and managers across Kiribati including in outer islands and document key strengths, challenges and any relevant issues in teaching learning processes which will need to be factored in for the strategy development.
- f. During the literature review and inception report development phase, identify and develop questions (during stakeholders engagement) requiring resolution to support with fine tuning the proposed methodology for the proposed scope of work, including plans for stakeholder engagement.
- g. Serve as facilitator during consultations with Government and partners to validate the proposed methodology and workplan and secure responses to questions identified to further fine tune the methodology.
- h. Finalize the literature review and inception report based on the validation process.

**2. Development of CPD strategy that focuses on continuous professional development, mentoring and technical support mechanisms**

- a. Based on the review as described above and qualifications and job description, develop professional development mechanism, mentoring/TA and monitoring framework to systematically guide continuous professional development in Kiribati, ensuring feasibility and sustainability of implementation, including with reference to costs, capacities and systems for the same. This will establish:

- i. Setting down the requirements for a specific, realistic number of hours of annual professional development, linked to the competency profiles and qualifications
  - ii. Targeting a specific group, such as all ECCE teachers, with other personnel added later;
  - iii. Clear linkage with ECCE act and regulations and national standards
  - iv. Interaction between pre-service training and continuous professional development, so that even at the early stages continuous professional development is an integral part of an overall workforce development system.
  - v. Expected content and training methods, with an emphasis on teachers strengthening their ability to implement effective practice for children's learning. Along with suggested areas, topics, content, training calendar, this will include guidance on modalities like cluster-based approaches, center-based approaches, distance learning and other approaches to training.
  - vi. Mechanisms for mentoring, technical support and monitoring of continuous professional development using existing mechanisms and approaches in place.
- b. Review existing current ECCE teacher training package and tools for training of teachers on ECCE curriculum and further build upon this to include content/modules on promoting the identified competencies. A co-construction approach should be followed to carry out the revision.

### **3. Drafting of costed operational plan to implement CPD strategy**

Through a consultative process develop a 1 year costed operational plan including a monitoring and evaluation plan to implement continuous professional development inclusive of mentoring and technical support mechanisms.

### **4. Piloting, validation and finalization of CPD strategy**

- a. Facilitate comprehensive piloting and validation process for policy directives and mentoring/TA and monitoring framework and revised current ECCE training package involving teachers, school heads, school management, MoE, UNICEF and other partners to gather detailed feedback. Ensure the piloting is conducted on a nationally representative sample (or as reasonably close as possible) of ECCE centres to ensure feedback reflects the diversity of contexts within Kiribati.
- b. Finalize all the documents including policy directives and mentoring/TA and monitoring framework and revised current ECCE training package based on the feedback received through validation.

Activity#3 and #4 could take place in parallel.

### **5. Finalization of the costed operational plan for CPD strategy**

Facilitate a comprehensive review of the draft 1 year costed plan involving MoE, UNICEF and partners to document feedback, considering implementability of the plan from experience of pilot, and finalize this based on the feedback received.

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE</b>	<b>Payment Amount (%)</b>
1.Develop Inception report inclusive of desk review and carry out inception consultations	Inception report	15days	1st payment 16%
2.Development of draft CPD strategy	Draft CPD strategy	35days	2 <sup>nd</sup> payment 37%
3.Drafting of a costed operational plan as well as M&E framework to implement CPD strategy	Draft operational plan with costing and M&E framework	20days	3rd payment 37%
4.Piloting of draft CPD strategy and Finalization of CPD strategy	Piloting methods developed abd data analysed Finalized version of CPD strategy	15days	
5.Finalization of costed operational plan to implement CPD strategy	Final operational plan for CPD strategy Final report	10days	4th payment 10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>95days</b>	<b>100% (US\$52,250)</b>

#### QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

##### Minimum Qualifications required:

☐ Bachelors ☒ Masters ☐ PhD ☒ Other

- Minimum of 15 years of working experience in early childhood development and/or early childhood education, or Education.
- Relevant experience with supporting ECCE strategies pertaining to ECCE workforce, designing, development and implementation of ECCE training strategies, developing competency profiles for teachers including ECCE teachers and linked performance management systems.
- Experience in Pacific Island countries preferred. The consultant is expected to listen and understand from the MoE, relevant government departments and partners what already exists, what Kiribati consider relevant and what will be most useful and ensure these learning leads the development of the methodology and approach of the consultancy.
- Experience with providing technical support or working with low and lower middle-income countries in the area of education; focus on early education is preferable.
- Excellent writing skills and ability to synthesize complex information and issues.
- Strong analytical and conceptual thinking.
- Ability to organize and plan complex work following the established timeframes.
- Ability to plan, coordinate, manage and facilitate high-level meetings.
- Previous experience working for UNICEF or another international organization an asset.
- Having a valid driving license is strongly recommended due to lack of reliable transport at all hours (costs associated with rental car should be included in the proposal)
- A flexible and adaptable mindset, including willingness to relate in new ways, and live (during missions) in a context with cuts to water and power, and sometimes limited availability of fresh fruits and vegetables

#### CONDITIONS OF WORK AND CLARIFICATION ON SUPERVISION

The consultant is expected to kick start the consultancy remotely. Out of 95 working days in this contract, minimum of 2 in-country missions (20 days per mission) are expected.

The consultant will be supervised by Education Specialist, UNICEF Kiribati Office, and Early Childhood Education Specialist, UNICEF Pacific in partnership with Director of Education, Ministry of Education, Kiribati. All deliverables will be submitted in draft form and reviewed by MoE and UNICEF with the expectation that feedback will be integrated in the final version of each deliverable submitted for payment. Payments will be made on the basis of approved deliverables by the Chief of Education at UNICEF Pacific, in collaboration with MoE, Kiribati.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy 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. 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 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.
- Consultant 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**

Please submit a technical proposal and a separate financial offer (in USD) along with your application.

The technical proposal should define the approach and methodology for executing the consultancy, with critical consideration on how a strong Pacific approach will be adopted.

The financial proposal should be a lump sum amount in US dollars 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.