

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTORS AND CONSULTANTS

Title of Assignment	National Consultancy for the Development of the Early Childhood Development <i>M'mera Mpoyamba</i> Advocacy and Communication Strategy Documentation Consultant	
Requesting Section	Nutrition	
Location	Place of assignment: Lilongwe, with field travel	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input type="checkbox"/> Office Based:	
Contract Duration	4 months	
Number of working days	55 working days	
Planned Start and End Date	From: July 2022	To: November 2022

BACKGROUND

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supports national efforts towards the realization of children's rights to Survival, Development, Protection and Participation. The UNICEF Nutrition Programme work in close partnership with the Government of Malawi under the leadership of the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA) and other ministries including Ministry of Gender and Child Development with the overall objective to improve the nutrition situation of children under 5 years and ensure that they have access and use quality promotive, preventive and curative nutritional services to reduce malnutrition.

Early childhood, which spans the period of age 0-5, is critical for cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. During these years, a child's newly developing brain is highly plastic and responsive to change. Optimal early childhood development requires a stimulating and nurturing environment, access to books and learning materials, interactions with responsive and attentive caregivers, adequate nutrients, access to good quality early childhood education, and safety and protection. Latest data from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2020/2021 shows that in Malawi, fifty nine percent of children age 3-4 years were developmentally on track in at least three of the four domains {physical (89%), social-emotional (78%), and learning domains (74%), literacy-numeracy (17%)}. Attendance to early childhood education programmes was low (34%).

Evidence also shows that attendance to Early Childhood Education (ECE) was much more likely among children living in urban areas (51%) than rural (31%) and high from the richest (51%) than the poorest households (21%). The home environment also plays a role in the uptake of ECD services. However, evidence also shows that support for learning at the household level was very low from both fathers (2%) and mothers (12%). In Malawi, evidence also shows that access to learning and reading materials is also low with only 1% of children having access to three or more children's books. Almost half of the children age under 5 years were left at home with inadequate supervision in the previous week (44%). Only 17% of children age 3-4 years were developmentally on track in literacy-numeracy.

Children face a broad range of risk factors including poverty; poor health; high levels of family and environmental stress and exposure to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation; and inadequate care and learning opportunities face inequalities and may fail to reach their developmental potential. Investing in the early years is one of the most critical and cost-effective ways countries can reduce gaps that often place children with low social and economic status at a disadvantage. Research has shown that there is low uptake of Early Childhood Development (ECD), in schools hence the need for a focussed and accommodative advocacy strategy that encompasses all the stakeholders' requirements for better implementation of ECD and address of challenges both identified and emergent.

UNICEF Malawi would like to engage a national Consultant to develop an Evidence Based National ECD Advocacy and Communication Strategy to support demand creation for ECD services, raise awareness on ECD and advocate on ECD financing and prioritisation in the national budget.

JUSTIFICATION

UNICEF is supporting the Government of Malawi to achieve the Malawi Growth and Development strategy-III, Malawi Implementation Plan (MIP-1) and Multi sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2018-2020 to facilitate the delivery of the 13 high impact Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) intervention to achieve positive nutrition outcome in the country. To this end, UNICEF has over the years implemented high impact nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific interventions promoting adoption of positive nutrition practices in Maternal, Infant Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) and nutrition sensitive agriculture.

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PURPOSE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The overall objective of the consultancy is to develop a comprehensive evidence based multisectoral ECD Advocacy and Communication Strategy with clear social and behaviour change indicators to create demand and promote uptake of ECD service through advocacy, social and community mobilisation efforts. In addition, the Consultant will develop a costed implementation plan and M&E Framework.

SCOPE OF WORK/OBJECTIVES

The Consultant will collaborate with Ministry of Gender and other Ministries under guidance of the Director of Children's Affairs in the Ministry of Gender and UNICEF ECD Specialist and Social and Behaviour Change Specialist within UNICEF Nutrition Section to develop an evidence based ECD Advocacy and Communication Strategy, implementation and costed M&E and plan.

The Consultant will undertake the following activities:

1. Compile an inception report showing in-depth understanding of the assignment
2. Conduct a desk review of secondary data sources on multisectoral (ECD, Nutrition, Health, WASH, Child Protection, HIV&AIDS) policies and strategy and adapt key ECD issues for inclusion in the ECD Advocacy and Communication strategy, drawing on key lessons learnt from the implementation of the *M'mera M'poyamba* campaign and highlighting best practices in East and Southern African Countries (ESARO), ECD Review of National Early Childhood Development Policy and Strategy and other national strategic documents
3. Conduct national level stakeholder's consultation to validate desk review findings and enrich the interpretation of the desk review data
4. Conduct qualitative key informant interviews to gather primary data and validate desk review findings at various implementation levels

5. Develop evidence-based multisectoral ECD Advocacy and Communication Strategy with clear objectives, desirable change and implementation plan, costed monitoring and evaluation framework

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

To whom will the consultant report (supervisory and any other reporting/ communication lines):

The consultant will report to UNICEF ECD Specialist and SBC Specialist operationally with technical oversight from the Director of Child Affairs in the Ministry of Gender.

What type of reporting will be expected from the consultant and in what format/style will the submissions of reports/outputs be done:

The consultant will be expected to submit reports/outputs through emails communication.

How will consultant consult and deliver work and when will reporting be done:

The consultant will consult and deliver their work using both emails and verbal communication. All agreed actions pertaining to the particular task will be documented and shared through email for follow up and accountability.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

In alignment with the scope of work as described above, the consultant will be expected to perform the following activities and deliverables as per the schedule and estimated dates below:

Task	Deliverable/Outcome (e.g. Inception, progress, final reports, training material, workshop, etc.)	Estimated # of days	Planned Completion date	% of total fee payable
Inception report detailing understanding of TORs, methodology to be employed, activity plan and resource needs with a detailed workplan	Inception report	5	19 th July	10%
Desk review of secondary data sources, outlining key gaps and best practice approach in implementation of demand creation and advocacy activities for ECD (clearly define scope for communication for development ECD interventions).	Desk review report	10	3 rd August	10% Payment based upon successful delivery of an approved product of the task

Conduct qualitative interviews at various implementation levels and design evidence-based demand creation, advocacy, key messages for target audiences considering potential barriers and maximizing use of potential facilitators.	Field report detailing key findings and social norms and KAP/B on ECD.	10 days	18 th August	20% - Payment based upon successful delivery of an approved product of the task
Develop evidence based ECD Demand Creation and Advocacy Strategy, M&E plan and costed implementation Framework for ECD	• Draft ECD Advocacy and Communication Strategy	15 days	9 th September	30% - Payment based upon successful
communication for development interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costed M&E Framework for ECD Advocacy and Communication activities. • Costed Implementation Plan for Advocacy and Communication ECD activities. 			delivery of an approved product of the task
Validation and stakeholder consultative meetings demand promotion and advocacy strategy, M&E framework for ECD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalised ECD Advocacy and Communication Strategy • Finalised M&E Framework Finalised Costed Implementation Framework 	5	19 th September	10%
Final submission of ECD Advocacy and Communication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final approved version of strategy with following annexes' • Costed implementation plan • M&E Framework 	10	5 th October	20%

All final outputs of documents will be required as soft copies in word and final approved documents shared as PDF.

However, as the actual starting date may impact the dates estimated in the TOR, a detailed workplan with exact timeframes and actual delivery dates will be jointly agreed upon between the consultant/ individual contractor and the supervisor upon contract signature.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION OF RESULTS

The performance of work will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

- Completion of tasks specified in TOR
- Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables

- Quality of work
- Demonstration of high standards in cooperation and communication with UNICEF and counterparts
- Satisfactory quality completion of each deliverable

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

All payments, without exception, will be made upon certification from the supervisor of the contract, of the satisfactory and quality completion of deliverables and upon receipt of the respective and approved invoice.

Local transport costs will be reimbursed on actual expenditures and upon presentation of original supporting documents. Living costs for approved field travel will be in accordance with the UNICEF standard rates and regulations. Travel to the field will be for a maximum of 10 days and paid at the applicable DSA rate upon prior approval by the supervisor.

DESIRED COMPETENCIES, TECHNICAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

Academic qualification:

- Advanced university degree or equivalent experience in Programme Communication or Social and Behaviour Change Communication; Sociology, Mass Communication or other field related to behaviour change and communication.
- Demonstrated experience in knowledge management documentation

Work experience:

- Minimum 10 years' experience in the field of social behaviour change, demand creation, advocacy and communication
- Solid experience in developing Social and Behaviour Change/demand creation/advocacy and or communication strategies
- Proven experience in working in the ECD sector will be an added advantage
- Demonstrated experience in knowledge management documentation
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Technical skills, knowledge and strength areas:

- Knowledge of ECD and one or more other relevant areas (e.g. behaviour change, health promotion, community development, education, etc.)

Competencies:

- The ideal candidate should possess excellent communication, writing and analytical skills
- The ideal candidate should be well conversant with multisectoral strategies and policies relevant to ECD

Languages:

- Fluency in spoken and written English.
- Fluency in any of the local languages spoken across the work districts will be an added advantage

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

UNICEF will regularly communicate with the consultant and provide feedback and guidance and necessary support so to achieve objectives of the work, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to the performance and quality of work.

As per policy on consultants and individual contractors, the individual will be expected to complete a list of mandatory training, including policies on Prohibiting and Combatting Fraud and Corruption, Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority and other relevant policies for their information and acknowledgment upon acceptance of the offer. Prior to the issuance of the official contract, the consultant/individual contractor is requested to complete the applicable mandatory trainings.

The assignment will be carried from Lilongwe with possible travel to districts for consultations as agreed with the supervisor. UNICEF will not provide office space for the consultant; however, the consultant will be required to provide briefing to Ministry of Gender and UNICEF as per agreed milestones.

UNICEF will not provide a laptop or any electronic equipment to the consultant. UNICEF will also not provide transport. The cost of transport should be borne in the financial proposal.

CONDITIONS

- ✦ The consultancy will be on a short-term arrangement basis over a period of 4 months; however the consultant will only work for 55 days during this contract period.
- ✦ The candidate selected will be governed by and subject to UNICEF's General Terms and Conditions for individual contracts.
- ✦ No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant.
- ✦ The consultant will be based in Lilongwe with possible travel for district for consultations.
- ✦ The consultant will be paid an all-inclusive fee (stationary, communication and other miscellaneous expenses) as per the stipulated deliverable and payment schedule.
- ✦ The consultant is not entitled to payment for overtime, weekends or public holidays, medical insurance, taxes, and any form of leave.
- ✦ Travel expenses for official in-country trips, will be covered in accordance with UNICEF's rules and tariffs. The estimate number of travel days for the assignment should be included in the financial proposal. No travel should take place without an email travel authorization from the Ministry of Gender.
- ✦ Standard UNICEF procedures will apply for invoicing and all other financial management requirements set out in the contract.
- ✦ Standard penalty clauses will also apply for late and poor-quality deliverables. The supervisor of the contract will provide the consultant with the criteria for the evaluation of the quality of each deliverable.
- ✦ Additional details of UNICEF rules, regulations and conditions will be attached to the contract.
- ✦ Consultants will not have supervisory responsibilities or authority on UNICEF budget.
- ✦ The assignment is an off-site support.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested consultants should provide the following:

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. Brief technical proposal (no longer than five pages) demonstrating the consultant's understanding of the assignment and approach/methodology to the assignment
3. Financial proposal including a breakdown of their all-inclusive fees (including professional fees, travel, living cost, visa and other costs). Complete the attached form.



Financial
Proposal.xlsx

4. References details