

United Nations Children's Fund

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS

Title:	Funding Code:	Type of Engagement	Duty Station:
Adolescent Empowerment and Innovation Lead		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant (International) <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant (National)	Hybrid
<p>Background:</p> <p>Adolescents in Sierra Leone are growing up in a world marked by rapid changes and unforeseen challenges. The Covid-19 pandemic, Ebola epidemic, climate change, and distant conflicts have disrupted societies, reshaping the lives and futures of young people. These global challenges, combined with local issues like high rates of teenage pregnancy, gender inequality, and limited access to essential services, are placing immense pressure on adolescents to adapt and thrive. As Sierra Leone strives towards middle-income status by 2030 and works to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and National Development Targets, the empowerment of adolescents is essential for national development.</p> <p>However, empowerment for Sierra Leonean adolescents goes beyond education alone. Adolescents need access to mental health services, sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), life skills development, economic opportunities, and platforms for civic engagement. Girls, in particular, face heightened risks, including early pregnancy, child marriage, and exclusion from educational and economic opportunities. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive, multisectoral approach that ensures all adolescents—especially marginalized groups—are supported to reach their full potential.</p> <p>In response to these challenges, the Government of Sierra Leone, in partnership with UNICEF, is committed to empowering adolescents across multiple sectors. UNICEF has led initiatives such as menstrual hygiene management programs, integrating life skills into education, adolescent health services, and youth-led climate action. A key element of these efforts is the Innovation section's Digital Learning Hubs, designed to provide accessible, technology-driven education and skills development for out-of-school adolescents, with a specific focus on empowering girls. These hubs aim to bridge the gap for young people who have dropped out of the formal education system, providing them with digital literacy, entrepreneurship skills, and other tools for success in the digital economy. The program not only addresses education but also prepares adolescents for meaningful participation in their communities and the workforce.</p> <p>In light of the complexity and scope of these challenges, UNICEF Sierra Leone is seeking an international expert in adolescent development and participation (please indicate the level of the position. P3? P4?). This consultant will play a key role in ensuring the inclusive implementation of the Digital Learning Hubs, with a strong focus on reaching out-of-school girls and other marginalized adolescents. Additionally, the consultant will provide technical expertise to guide the operationalization of ADAP in the CO programming with focus on the roll-out of adolescent life skills framework in and out of school, the design of adolescent sexual and reproductive health services, social and child protection, and citizen engagement and adolescent participation.</p> <p>By prioritizing innovation, inclusivity, and a gender-transformative approach, UNICEF aims to support adolescents in becoming educated, empowered, and active participants in Sierra Leone's development, ultimately contributing to the nation's progress towards achieving its development goals.</p>			
<p>Purpose and Objectives:</p> <p>The purpose of this consultancy is to support UNICEF Sierra Leone the successful, inclusive rollout of the Digital Learning Hubs and lead the drafting process of a comprehensive ADAP strategy for the Country Office that integrates a strong, intentional focus on girls' empowerment.</p>			

Additionally, the consultancy aims to strengthen resource mobilization efforts for the ADAP and Innovation programme, ensuring sustainable funding and strategic alignment with the new Country programme.

Methodology and Technical Approach:

The consultant will adopt a **hybrid approach**, combining both remote and in-person work to ensure efficient, flexible support to UNICEF Sierra Leone. Key elements of the methodology include:

1. **Desk Review:** Conduct a review of existing policies, programmes, and strategies on adolescent development, with a focus on cross-sectoral integration, gender equity, and adolescent participation.
2. **Stakeholder Consultations:** Engage with key stakeholders, including government ministries, UNICEF teams, civil society, community leaders, and youth organizations to gather insights, align priorities, and identify gaps in adolescent programming.
3. **Field Visits and Participatory Workshops:** Conduct site visits to **Digital Learning Hubs** and other key program areas, involving adolescents—particularly girls—in workshops to ensure their voices are central to strategy development and programme design.
4. **Resource Mobilization:** Work closely with the Country Office to develop a targeted resource mobilization strategy for the Innovation and ADAP programme, identifying potential funding sources and partners to ensure long-term sustainability.

Capacity Building for Multisectoral Empowerment: Design and facilitate capacity-building initiatives that go beyond life skills to include **civic engagement, youth-led climate action, mental health, and gender-responsive programming for the Digital Learning Hubs.**

Management, Organization and Timeframe:

The Consultant will work under the overall guidance and oversight of the UNICEF Innovation Specialist, with a secondary reporting line to the Social Transformation Chief for ADAP Programme strategy. While primarily home-based, the consultant will undertake at least two trips to Sierra Leone, totaling approximately 30 days, including a minimum of three field trips to Digital Learning Hub sites and other key program locations. Field travel requirements will be discussed and agreed upon with the Consultant at the start of the assignment.

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:

5 working days out of 3 months, so approximately 10%

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](#)

Budget Year: 2024	Requesting Section/Issuing Office: Innovation UNICEF Sierra Leone	Reasons why work cannot be done by staff: The role requires significant and specific technical capacity and expertise on adolescent and youth empowerment.	
Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Consultant Sourcing: <input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Both		Request for: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Consultancy <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment	
Consultant Selection Method: <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Roster) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desk Review/Interview)			
If Extension, Justification for extension: N/A			
Supervisor: Innovation Specialist	Start Date: 1 st December 2024	End Date: 30 th June 2025	Number of (working) Days/Months: 7 months

*** Expected timelines for completion are estimated and may vary depending on progress**

Work Assignment Overview

Category		Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline:	Payment schedule: Monthly		
				7 months	%	\$	
30%	Support to ADAP Programming	LIFE SKILLS ROLL-OUT/SCALE UP	Guide/Oversee/Support the roll-out of the life skills framework and activities in schools and out-of-school for Education, CP and EPSP with the cash+ care - January/April 2025.	Jan-25 Feb-25 Mar-25 Apr-25	5.0%	TBC	
		UNICEF CO ADAP ACTION PLAN	Lead the drafting and development process of an integrated/multisectoral UNICEF ADAP action plan for operationalization of ADAP in CO programming with focus on life skills, SRHR, mental health, social and child protection, civic engagement and participation and climate action; as well as the identification, prioritization and integration of ADAP outputs in sector and cross-sectoral RWP	At least 6 RWP with integrated ADAP outputs (February 2025)	Feb-25	5.0%	TBC
			Drafted ADAP action plan - including Vision, Strategies, and Approach on priority ADAP (March 2025)	Mar-25	5.0%	TBC	
		Resource mobilisation	1) Update ADAP Investment/Opportunity Case(s) February 2025; 2) Develop an overarching CO ADAP funding proposal - March 2025; 3) Map and identify potential interested donors and funding mechanisms and lead development of ADAP funding proposals; 4) Support integration of ADAP within funding proposals - January - April 2025	Updated ADAP Investment Case – (February 2025)	Feb-25	5.0%	TBC
				ADAP overarching funding proposal (March 2025)	Mar-25	5.0%	TBC
				At least 4 ADAP proposals developed for specific donor/fundraising mechanism (– June 2025)	Jun-25	5.0%	TBC

70%	Support the design of implementation strategy and roll-out of Digital Learning Hubs:	Content: Toolkit and Resource development	Ensure the inclusive rollout of UNICEF's Digital Learning Hubs for out-of-school girls and marginalized youth, providing technical guidance for development and delivery of content and resources for skill building and skills applicability such as digital literacy, life skills, youth climate action & advocacy.	Design and support the delivery and engagement strategy for Digital Learning Hubs. Draft a technical manual for implementing the Digital Learning Hubs, focusing on content delivery, digital literacy, and life skills, for out-of-school girls and marginalized youth.	Jun-25	5.0%	TBC
				Lifeskills: Design a course blended Learning Passport course curriculum together with a facilitation guide that can be delivered in DLH, online or in schools.	Jan-25	10.0%	TBC
				Climate Action: Design a course blended Learning Passport course curriculum together with a facilitation guide, inclusive of UPSHIFT methodology, that can be delivered in DLH, online or in schools.	Feb-25	10.0%	TBC
				Advocacy: Design, in partnership with MoICE, a course blended Learning Passport course curriculum together with a facilitation guide that can be delivered in DLH, online or in schools.	Mar-25	10.0%	TBC

		<p>Program implementation design and (iterative) improvement</p>	<p>Support refinement of DLH implementation strategy based on data and feedback, assessment of program efficacy for addressing evolving needs and ensuring relevance, accessibility and impact.</p>	<p>Strategic framework and recommendation for enhancing gender equity and inclusion in DLH participation.</p>	<p>Jun-25</p>	<p>2.5%</p>	<p>TBC</p>
		<p>Identify barriers to girls' participation and recommend strategies for improving accessibility – more particularly of girls and children with disability - ensuring Hubs are gender-sensitive and responsive and inclusive..</p>					
		<p>Field Visits</p>	<p>Visit program sites of the Digital Learning Hubs, to monitor progress, gather feedback, and ensure programmes are reaching marginalized adolescents.</p>	<p>Specific site visit reports detailing the progress of the Digital Learning Hubs, feedback from participants, challenges, and success stories.</p>	<p>Apr-25 Jun-25</p>	<p>2.5%</p>	<p>TBC</p>

		And Youth Networks	Engage and foster collaborative partnerships with national and community stakeholders, including government representatives and youth-led organizations, to ensure alignment with national development goals, mobilize/leverage partnerships for capacity building and content development and strengthen the DLH framework	Network building strategies that engage government agencies and youth organisations to support the hubs' long-term success.	Jun-25	5.0%	TBC
		Capacity Building & Bootcamps	Provide training and capacity-building sessions for, partners and young people, and implementing organizations on civic engagement, youth-led climate action, mental health, and life skills.	Delivery of capacity-building workshops and training sessions to local partners, youth organizations, and adolescents themselves.	Apr-25 Jun-25	2.5%	TBC
				Strengthen the capacity of local and national stakeholders to deliver comprehensive adolescent programming that integrates empowerment and participation across all sectors in Innovation.	Apr-25 Jun-25	2.5%	TBC

			Develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to track the progress of the Digital Learning Hub programme, with a focus on the outcomes for adolescent girls and marginalized youth.	A robust M&E framework with clearly defined indicators for tracking the progress of the Digital Learning Hubs, focusing on gender outcomes, digital literacy, life skills, and empowerment.	Jan-25	5.0%	TBC
		Monitoring and Reporting:	Provide regular progress reports, documenting lessons learned, best practices, and success stories from the implementation of Digital Learning Hub.	Data collection and analysis tools that facilitate regular monitoring and allow for data-driven decision-making.	Jan-25 Feb-25 Mar-25 Apr-25 May-25	2.5%	TBC
			Ensure data-driven decision-making and incorporate feedback from adolescents, stakeholders, and implementing partners to improve programme design and execution.	A final report summarizing the implementation progress, lessons learned, and recommendations for scaling up the initiative.	Jun-25	5.0%	TBC
		Report and Knowledge Sharing:	Produce a final report summarizing key achievements, challenges, and recommendations for the Digital Learning Hub Programme and strategy.	A knowledge-sharing document detailing key learnings from the Digital Learning Hubs, with recommendations for scaling up successful interventions to other regions or countries.	Jun-25	5.0%	TBC
			Facilitate knowledge-sharing sessions with UNICEF teams, government partners, and other key stakeholders to disseminate best practices and promote the scale-up of	Interactive sessions with UNICEF teams, government partners, and stakeholders to share best practices, encourage cross-sectoral collaboration, and promote the adoption of innovative	Jun-25	2.5%	TBC

			successful interventions.	solutions for adolescent programming.			
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Estimated Consultancy Fee	150 days 30 days 2024 120 days 2025		
DSA for 30 days (when consultant should be in country, 2 times)			
Travel International	2 round trips		
Travel Local (please include travel plan)	Based on actual		
Residency Permit Costs			
Total Estimated Consultancy Costsⁱ			
<p>Minimum Qualifications required:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>Enter Disciplines: Social Sciences, Gender Studies, Development Studies, Education, Public Health, International Relations, or a related field. Specialized training in adolescent programming, life skills, or digital education would be essential.</p>	<p>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:</p> <p><u>Qualifications:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 5 years of professional work experience in the fields of youth programming, education, gender and development, or social protection, preferably within international development organizations. • Proven track record in leading adolescent-focused programming with significant experience in designing and implementing life skills, digital learning, civic engagement, or gender-focused initiatives. • Experience working in low-resource and marginalized contexts, especially in developing countries, with a focus on gender-responsive programming for adolescents. • Demonstrated experience in program management, capacity building, and multisectoral collaboration. • Previous experience with UNICEF or another major international organization would be highly advantageous, especially with direct involvement in youth empowerment, protection, and development projects. • Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of another official UN language or local language is an asset. <p><u>Other skills and attributes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong understanding of adolescent 		

	<p>development and participation (ADAP), with proven expertise in designing, implementing, and managing youth and adolescent-focused programs, particularly in gender-sensitive and inclusive education and life skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of adolescent health, protection, and education frameworks with experience in integrating SRHR, mental health, and civic engagement. • Expertise in digital learning strategies and educational technologies, especially in contexts related to marginalized and out-of-school youth. • Proficiency in designing and using monitoring and evaluation frameworks for youth programs. • Experience in fundraising, partnership development, and resource mobilization, including drafting proposals and concept notes for donor engagement. • Strong analytical skills to develop multisectoral strategies and frameworks that align ADAP programs with education, health, protection, and youth participation priorities.
<p>Administrative details: Visa assistance required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation arranged by the office: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office Based: If office based, seating arrangement identified: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IT and Communication equipment required: <input type="checkbox"/> Internet access required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

ⁱ 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

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.