

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT**

<p><b>Title:</b> Piloting and revision of the ECE advocacy and communication strategy</p>	<p><b>Funding Code:</b></p> <p><b>Grant:</b></p> <p><b>WBS:</b></p>	<p><b>Type of Engagement</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant (International)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Consultant (National)</p>	<p><b>Duty Station:</b></p> <p>Freetown</p>
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**Background:**

In 2020, UNICEF was awarded a Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) grant to adapt, enhance and scale up the Better Early Learning and Development at Scale (BELDS) approach to mainstream Early Childhood Education (ECE) in sector plans. Implemented through consortia of partners including the World Bank, Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN) and more than forty agencies contributing technical resources, tools and guidance, the project developed the ECE Accelerator Toolkit, an online resource hosted by UNICEF to support in-country mobilization and capacity development of stakeholders for enhancing ECE analysis, planning, and implementation.

The five KIX target countries: Lesotho, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, have generated readily available evidence identifying the technical support, capacity building and associated tools and resources needed to ensure that ECE is well-reflected in all stages of the education sector planning, implementation, monitoring and review. ECE systems at the country level have been strengthened through tailored technical support to the Ministries of Education (at national and subnational levels) to facilitate evidence-based policy choices for the sub-sector. Dedicated efforts have also been made to generate new tools and global goods and amplify knowledge exchange, fostering communities of practice in project countries, and through KIX Hubs and other platforms for wider reach.

In Sierra Leone, a major change achieved through the KIX project is the inclusion of the pre-primary sub-sector as a core component of the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2022-2026, formally approved in June 2022. This represents the first time that the pre-primary objectives, strategies, and interventions have been included with a dedicated budget line in the ESP for Sierra Leone. This change was facilitated by leveraging the ECE Accelerator Toolkit to develop an ECE Technical Working group which led a comprehensive pre-primary sub-sector analysis and advocated with senior officials and the Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE). The other major result achieved through the KIX project is the development of the ECE advocacy and communication strategy and plan. Under the proposed extension of the project, UNICEF will support MBSSE in the revision and implementation of the advocacy and communication strategy and plan in support of the prioritization and expansion of early childhood education in Sierra Leone.

It is against this background that UNICEF Sierra Leone seeks to hire an advocacy specialist to facilitate the revision and implementation of the ECE advocacy and communications strategy and plan.

**Purpose and Objective:**

The purpose of this consultancy is to revise the existing ECE advocacy and communications strategy and plan, and upon finalization, facilitate the implementation of the strategy and plan, utilising the relevant available tools, partners and UNICEF staff and teams. The consultant will work in close collaboration with UNICEF Sierra Leone Education, Social and Behavior Change (SBC) and Communication/Advocacy sections and with relevant national stakeholders (the MBSSE, the

Teaching Service Commission (TSC), the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Gender and Children’s Affairs, the ECE technical working group, and other organizations as needed) to achieve the below mentioned objectives.

The objectives of this assignment are to:

1. Revise and finalise the ECE advocacy and communication strategy and plan through consultations with relevant education stakeholders and partners, incorporating good practices and lessons learned.
2. Support the coordination, implementation, monitoring and reporting of the Advocacy and Communications plan and strategy for ECE
3. Contribute to the development and production of multimedia assets, knowledge products, and campaigns in support of the objectives of the ECE advocacy and communications strategy and plan.

**Methodology and Technical Approach:**

Through remote and face-to-face consultations with UNICEF staff, relevant education partners and champions, including government, district and community stakeholders, the consultant will deliver the tasks listed below.

- Develop an inception report detailing understanding of the ToR, methodology to be employed, activity plan and resource needs with a detailed workplan.
- Conduct desk review of the developed ECE advocacy strategy and plan, undertaking preliminary interviews with relevant UNICEF staff and relevant stakeholders involved in the development of the strategy.
- Conduct and facilitate a series of consultations and workshops with partners to co-develop the strategy and plan.
- Present finalised ECE advocacy strategy and plan to relevant stakeholders–workshop/meeting.
- Coordinate the implementation, performance monitoring and adaptation of the advocacy and communications plan.
- Facilitate the development of advocacy and knowledge products detailed in the advocacy and communications plan, including case studies and briefs.

**Management, Organization and Timeframe:**

The consultant will work under the overall guidance and oversight of the UNICEF ECD Specialist. In delivering the tasks, the consultant will work in close coordination with UNICEF Sierra Leone Education and Social and Behavior Change (SBC) sections and with relevant national stakeholders (the MBSSE, the Teaching Service Commission (TSC), the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Gender and Children’s Affairs, the ECE technical working group, and other organizations as needed). The consultant will be based in Freetown with travels to the field (districts) as needed. The timing and location of the implementation and the development of knowledge products will be agreed upon during the inception phase of the consultancy.

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>Work Assignment Overview</b>			
Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline:	Payment schedule: on acceptance of deliverables
start date of consultancy		TBA	
1. Develop an inception report detailing understanding of the ToR, methodology to be employed, activity plan and resource needs with a detailed workplan.	Inception report submitted.	2 weeks	Deliverable -1  (20% payment)
2. Conduct desk review of the developed ECE advocacy strategy and plan, undertaking preliminary interviews with relevant UNICEF staff and relevant stakeholders involved in the development of the strategy.	Desk review and interview summary submitted.	2 <sup>nd</sup> month	
3. Conduct and facilitate a series of consultations and workshops with partners to co-develop the strategy and plan.	Workshop / draft strategy and plan.	2 <sup>nd</sup> month	Deliverable -2  (50% payment)
4. Present finalised ECE advocacy strategy and plan to relevant stakeholders – workshop/meeting.	Finalised advocacy and communications strategy and plan / presentation meeting.	3 <sup>rd</sup> month	
5. Coordinate implementation and monitoring of the advocacy and communications plan	Implementation and monitoring report submitted.	30 days	Deliverable -3  (30% payment)
6. Development and implementation of relevant advocacy products and publications under the advocacy plan.	Delivery of suite of Knowledge/advocacy products – agreed on in inception phase.		

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

Budget Year: 2024	Requesting Section/Issuing Office: Education Section	Reasons why work cannot be done by staff:  The KIX extension focuses on revising the advocacy and communication strategy and plan, and documentation of case studies, lessons learned and production of quality reports including advocacy briefs. This requires dedicated technical expertise in advocacy c to work closely with the ECD team in MBSSE, TSC and the ECD/ECE technical working group for at least 4 months (86 working days) to deliver the expected results.	
Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, please justify:			
Consultant Sourcing: <input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International Both <input type="checkbox"/>  Consultant Selection Method: <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Roster) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desk Review/Interview)		Request for: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Consultancy  <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment	
If Extension, Justification for extension: N/A			
Supervisor:  Education Specialist, ECD	Start Date:  TBA	End Date:  TBA	Number of Days (working):  86 days

Estimated Consultancy Fee:			
Travel International			
Travel Local (please include travel plan)			
Residency Permit Costs/Visa fee			
DSA (local travels)			
Total Estimated Consultancy Costs:			
<p><b>Minimum Qualifications required:</b> Advanced university degree (Masters, PhD) in, digital communications, international relations, political or social sciences, education, human rights.</p>	<p><b>Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:</b> Experience</p> <p>Minimum of five years of progressively advanced experience in advocacy, which must include skills in conceptualizing and developing communication and advocacy strategies, materials, and action plans for implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experience in developing/implementing ECD/ECE advocacy and communication materials.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrated familiarity with the advocacy work of UNICEF and/or international development, humanitarian, and child rights issues.</li> <li>▪ Excellent knowledge of English is required - strong communication skills (written and oral) in English are a necessity.</li> <li>▪ Proven ability to think critically and seek out, synthesize, and interpret large amounts of information.</li> <li>▪ Concrete experience of fostering open dialogue, building trust, and engaging key stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Expertise in using MS Office software and carrying out research.</li> </ul>		
<p>Administrative details:            Visa assistance required: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>            Transportation arranged by the office: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Home Based: <input type="checkbox"/> Office Based: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If office based, seating arrangement identified: <input type="checkbox"/>            IT and Communication equipment required: <input type="checkbox"/>            Internet access required: <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
Request Authorised by Section Head,	Request Verified by HR:		

Endorsed by Deputy Representative, Programme:	Approved by Representative
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<sup>i</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.

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.