**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS/INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTORS**

**Full-Time Contractor Research & Evaluation**

1. **BACKGROUND / RATIONALE**

UNICEF is committed to the central role of research, monitoring and evaluation in results-based management, and continually seeks to strengthen the evidence function with a view to supporting programming. While furthering accountability towards governments, donors and other partners, research and evaluation can yield lessons that will further enhance UNICEF’s contribution to development and the lives of children across the world.

In accordance with UNICEF’s decentralized structure, most evidence activities are conducted at country and regional levels. Important challenges include strategic coverage, coherence, and ensuring that quality standards are consistently met. Strategic documents include important commitments relating to quality standards for all the types of evidence conducted in the country office (evaluations, research and studies) – examples include: the Research Policy 2017, Revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF 2018, the UNICEF Regional Evaluation Strategy 2020, the 2015 Memorandum on Management of Evaluation Processes and Accountability in UNICEF India and the Standard Operating Procedure for Quality Assurance and Ethical Standards of UNICEF-supported Studies, Research and Evaluations.

While accountability is high on ensuring all evidence generation is timely, of high quality and useful, evaluations at UNICEF are governed by a more stringent set of policies and processes and are a key component of UNICEF India’s country performance scorecard. As such, considerable technical as well as coordination support is required to ensure that evaluations meet the policy requirements and are ultimately used.

The overall evidence work in UNICEF India is coordinated and technically led by the two Research and Evaluation Specialists, who are the Chairs of the reference groups for all the evaluations, and the Secretaries of the PRIME Steering Committee, which oversees the quality of the evidence agenda at UNICEF India.

Over the past year, the portfolio of activities managed and supported by the Research & Evaluation team has expanded substantially, with 14 ongoing evaluations, 22 studies and 13 research activities. In addition, the R&E team is supporting a number of COVID-related initiatives such as a real-time evaluation and lessons learned reviews, to be able to learn from UNICEF’s support to the ongoing crisis in India. At the same time, the R&E team is expanding their engagement and collaboration with other research and evaluation partners in the ecosystem, including the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office in NITI Aayog, and wants to strengthen capacity building support to state-level M&E units (in coloration with state office colleagues). Finally, the R&E team is seeking to substantially expand and improve its knowledge management activities, to ensure that evidence generated by UNICEF is disseminated and used in a compelling manner.

In line with UNICEF India’s commitment to further strengthen the quality assurance processes and quality management of all its evidence generation, the Country Office is seeking the support of a qualified consultant to support the existing R&E team on the various activities mentioned above; specifically, provide support to new and ongoing studies and research, provide support to the partnership with the DMEO and capacity building at the state level, and undertake a number of the knowledge management activities planned over the next year.

1. **PURPOSE OF ASSIGNMENT**

The purpose of this consultancy is to provide technical and operational support on both research and evaluations that UNICEF India is undertaking in 2021. The main tasks of the Research & Evaluation Consultant are detailed in Section 5 of these Terms of Reference (ToR).

**3. PROGRAMME AREA AND SPECIFIC PROJECT AREA**

Outcome: Programme Effectiveness - Country programme is effectively and efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality programming standards in achieving results for children

Output: UNICEF programmes, as well as State and National Governments, have enhanced knowledge and capability to design, implement and utilize high quality evidence, to improve programming and policy to achieve results for children.

**4. OBJECTIVE/S**

The objectives of this consultancy are to work toward the following outcomes:

* Ensure that evaluations, research and studies well-designed and well-planned, and of the highest possible quality to inform decision-making
* Ensure that research, studies evaluations follow all the policies, processes and guidelines as set out for evidence generation
* Ensure that findings from research, studies and evaluations are disseminated to the right audience/users through compelling knowledge products
* Ensure that capacity in monitoring, research and evaluation is built both internally as well as externally, engaging with partners, especially government M&E units

**5. MAJOR TASKS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED**

**A. Technical support to evaluations** (~25%)

The consultant will provide operational and technical support to UNICEF India personnel in designing and commissioning evaluations and to the evaluation teams conducting them. S/he will work closely with the evaluation team leaders throughout the entire evaluation process to ensure that evaluations are conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, as approved by the members of UNEG on 19 July 2007 as well as the quality standards defined in the 2018 Revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF and the 2013 UNICEF Regional Evaluation Strategy. Under the supervision of the Research and Evaluation Specialist, s/he will work closely with UNICEF staff commissioning the evaluations providing them with technical and operational assistance and ensuring internal procedures are followed, on activities as follows (further details on the requirements under each are provided in Annex 1):

1. TOR preparation for new evaluations
2. Data collection and data analysis
3. Report writing and finalization
4. Technical support to quality reviews
5. Technical assistance to communicating evaluation results

A key additional ‘evaluative’ activity UNICEF India aims to undertake in 2021 is a series of Lessons Learned Reviews, in the first instance linked to UNICEF India’s COVID-19 response. The consultant is expected to support on these internal Lessons Learned Reviews, by collating all relevant data and information, conduct a brief analysis using the framework decided upon, prepare the review meeting materials, document and write up a post review report with key findings and recommendations.

**B. Technical support to Research & Studies** (~10%)

The Research & Evaluation Consultant will be expected to provide support to research and studies being undertaken by UNICEF India, specifically those that are considered ‘major’ and those that are linked to COVID. The level of support will not be as extensive as outlined above for evaluations; however, there will be expectations to support in terms of:

* Sourcing relevant literature/synthesizing key evidence to inform scoping
* Drafting and reviewing concept notes/terms of reference
* Reviewing of data collection protocols and tools
* Facilitating quality reviews of key deliverables for research and studies
* Coordinating and undertaking discussions with programme teams to reiterate key technical issues
* Reviewing draft analysis/briefs/reports

A critical component of the support provided for research and studies will be safeguarding ethical principles and adherence to UNICEF ethical policies and standards. It is expected that the consultant, through their review and communication with programme colleagues and research teams, will pay particular attention to the ethical dimensions of evidence generation.

**C. Knowledge management** (~25%)

Design and implement knowledge management activities related to research, studies and evaluations, such as: support in copy-editing final deliverables; produce compelling infographics; coordinate/undertake a synthesis of evidence; co-author thematic briefs; author blog posts. Under guidance of the R&E Specialists, work with the communications team to ensure that evidence products are branded correctly and are being featured in external communications by UNICEF.

**D. Capacity building of national partners** (~30%)

Support the Research & Evaluation Specialists in implementing the activities as part of the partnership with the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) with NITI Aayog, including synthesizing the current situation and needs for M&E support across different states, co-developing a concept note to provide relevant capacity building support to states, preparing presentations for meetings and knowledge sharing webinars. Also generally support the R&E Specialist to follow up with DMEO so that actions are taken in a timely manner, and support in any new areas that emerge under the UNICEF-DMEO partnership.

**E. Internal capacity building (and other tasks)** (~10%)

Support the Research & Evaluation Specialists to implement the current plan for capacity building webinars for UNICEF staff members on technical themes and methodologies that are tailored to the current needs (including COVID-related challenges); prepare resources/materials and slides for webinars; coordinate with other contributors and guest speakers; draft and consolidate FAQs emerging from webinars

There may be other, ad-hoc requests for technical support such as sourcing existing guidelines/templates, analysis of existing data, attending meetings with research institutes for match making, drafting technical concept notes for requests from government, etc. It is expected that the consultant will be proactive and adaptive enough to accommodate these as they emerge.

**6. DELIVERABLES AND DEADLINES**

Based on a monthly work plan to be agreed with the Research and Evaluation Specialists, the consultant is expected to work full-time over the 11.5-month period of this contract.

At the end of each month, the consultant will be required to submit a monthly report (1-2 pages long), which outlines the completed tasks and the number of days dedicated to each task. The tasks and days will need to be based on the work plan agreed with the Research and Evaluation Specialists at the start of each month.

The below table outlines the expected tasks and dedicated time the consultant will execute under this contract. This is a rough estimate as new evaluations may arise and some evaluations may be more labour intensive than others.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Expected tasks | Expected key deliverables  *(note: excludes possible interim deliverables, as requested by supervisor; in addition, some deliverables might change as the specific task evolves)* | Estimated number of days | Indicative timeframe March 2021 – March 2022 |
| A. Evaluations | |  | **65** |  |
|  | **Evaluation #1 [YuWaah!]**  Provide technical assistance through all stages of the evaluation, including review and finalization of the inception report, technical and operational support to field testing of tools, 2-3 field visits\*, attendance of training workshop\*, review of draft final report, finalization of draft report’s audit trail and final report, dissemination of results. Support to management response. | Annotated inception report  Audit trail of inception report  Annotated data collection tools  Field visit reports (1 for each visit)\*  Training workshop report  Annotated draft final report  Audit trail of final report  Draft management response  Brief summary of evaluation findings (abstract)  Minutes of meetings | 15 | By June 2022 |
|  | **Evaluation #2 [SBCC Cells]**  Provide technical assistance through all stages of the evaluation, including review and finalization of the ToR, the inception report, technical and operational support to field testing of tools, 2-3 field visits\*, attendance of training workshop\*, review of draft final report, finalization of draft report’s audit trail and final report, dissemination of results. Support to management response. | Final ToR  Annotated inception report  Audit trail of inception report  Annotated data collection tools  Field visit reports (1 for each visit)\*  Training workshop report  Annotated draft final report  Audit trail of final report  Draft management response  Brief summary of evaluation findings (abstract)  Minutes of meetings | 15 | By June 2022 |
|  | **Lessons Learned Review(s)**  Undertake desk review, observations and key information interviews, conduct a brief analysis using the framework decided upon, prepare the review meeting materials, document and write up a post review report with key findings and recommendations | Final concept note  Activity mapping/summary  Data collection templates (excel)  KII discussion guides  KII notes document  Observation notes document  Analysis matrix  Draft report (max 15 pages)  Final report (max 15 pages)  Powerpoint presentation  Meeting minutes | 35 | By February 2022 |
| B. Research and studies | |  | **30** | **By June 2022** |
|  | Various tasks such as: sourcing existing literature/synthesize insights, drafting and reviewing concept notes/terms of reference; reviewing of data collection protocols and tools; facilitating quality reviews of key deliverables for research and studies; coordinating and undertaking discussions with programme teams to reiterate key technical issues; review draft analysis/briefs/reports, etc. | Annotated ToRs  Annotated inception reports, data collection tools  Annotated final report, briefs  Brief summaries of existing evidence (max 1 page)  Meeting minutes |  |  |
| C. Knowledge Management | |  | **60** | **By June 2022** |
|  | Various tasks such as: support in copy-editing final deliverables; produce compelling infographics; coordinate/undertake a synthesis of evidence; co-author thematic briefs; author blog posts | Copy-edited reports  Infographics – printed (max 2-3 pages)  Infographics – online  Brief synthesis report  Thematic briefs (max 5-6 pages)  Blog posts (max 500 words) |  |  |
| D. Capacity building of national partners | |  | 70 | **By June 2022** |
|  | Various tasks such as: synthesizing the current situation and needs for M&E support across different states, co-developing a concept note to provide relevant capacity building support to states, preparing presentations for meetings and knowledge sharing webinars | Final concept note  Meetings with state office colleagues  Matrix mapping of information on M&E needs  Presentations for knowledge sharing (max 25 slides each)  Meeting minutes |  |  |
| E. Internal capacity building (and other tasks) | |  | 26 | **By June 2022** |
|  | Various tasks such as: prepare resources/materials and slides for webinars; coordinate with other contributors and guest speakers; draft and consolidate FAQs emerging from webinars; webinar notes; other tasks to support the R&E team as required. | List and/or folder of resources  Webinar flyers  Draft powerpoint presentations  Webinar minutes/notes  FAQs documents |  |  |
|  | ***Total*** |  | ***251 days*** |  |

*\*These activities may take place virtually or in-person, depending on the situation w.r.t. COVID at the time.*

Note that timelines may be somewhat delayed, especially for the existing planned support for the evaluations as stated above, based on the uncertainty under the current COVID situation. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that the amount of support required over the next year will remain more or less the same; however, some tasks outlined in the table above will extend beyond the end-date of the current contract. A decision on contract extension will be made, if the requirement and funds exist.

**7. DUTY STATION**

New Delhi, India

**8. SUPERVISOR**

Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (Research)

**9. OFFICIAL TRAVEL INVOLVED (ITINERARY AND DURATION)**

Until the COVID situation improves, it is expected that the consultant will work virtually/remotely. Once it becomes safe to do so, the consultant will be expected to travel to support field visits, to hold Evaluation Reference Group meetings, to monitor field data collection, and to support dissemination activities. The estimated number of trips under this contract is five, with average duration of 3 days per trip. Travel will most likely be to five of the following states: Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Telangana, Karnataka, Gujarat. The final destinations for travel will be decided as per the requirement, in agreement with the R&E Specialist.

The consultant will be based in New Delhi. S/he will be expected to be available for discussions in the UNICEF India office on a regular basis. The consultant is expected to work with his/her own computer, from his/her own work space. A hot desk will be made available for the consultant for those days that they are required to come to the UNICEF India office in New Delhi.

To be able to undertake the activities above successfully, the consultant will be provided with a UNICEF email ID. The consultant is expected to communicate externally, with key partners of UNICEF, and will require access to key internal UNICEF platforms such as ECM and the research and evaluation database.

**10. ESTIMATED DURATION OF CONTRACT ( FULL TIME)**

This Consultant contract will begin on or before the 31st of July 2021 and end on 15th July 2022. The Consultant is expected to work full-time, over the 11.5-month period.

**11. QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES (CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT (Please use as applicable)**

* A post-graduate university degree in social sciences, with a module completed in research methods
* Minimum of five (5) years’ relevant work experience, progressively responsible at national and/or international levels in evaluation and research
* Knowledge of impact evaluations and development evaluations according to United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards
* Strong understanding of OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and [UNEG norms and standards for evaluation](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914), including those pertaining to ethics*.*
* Strong experience in managing research and evaluations (developing a plan/terms of reference and schedule, assigning tasks, ensuring milestones are met on a timely basis, ensuring project costs are within and approved budget, and ensuring that objectives are adequately addressed)
* Demonstrated technical expertise in evaluation design (experimental, quasi-experimental designs, and non-experimental designs), quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods, and writing-up of results for professional publications.
* Demonstrated experience in integrating an equity and gender perspective in evaluation design and analysis.
* Strong understanding of research ethics and be able to ascertain the right application of ethical principles for each evidence activity
* Demonstrated experience of researching and evaluating child and adolescent issues in India.
* Strong analytical writing and copy-editing skills, as well as creative visualization and graphics skills, with experience in creating compelling knowledge products for research/evidence.
* Familiarity with UNICEF programming areas, such as Health, Nutrition, Child Protection, WASH, Education, Disaster Risk Reduction, Gender, tribal issues, and urban issues is desirable.
* Familiarity with results-based management principles and tools is a plus
* Exposure to and experience with emergency programming, monitoring and evaluation, will be an asset, in particular experience with evidence generation around the current COVID pandemic.
* Fluency in English (verbal and written) and Hindi (verbal). Any other local languages in India is a plus
* Excellent oral and written skills in English, with the ability to analyse and synthesize information succinctly and accurately, tailored to the audience/reader
* Highly organized, self-motivated and dedicated individual, who hold him/herself to a high standard, and who works extremely well with others, especially people who may not have an in-depth understanding of research and evaluation methods
* Demonstrates core UNICEF competencies of:
  + Builds and maintains partnerships
  + Demonstrates self-awareness and ethical awareness
  + Drive to achieve results for impact
  + Innovates and embraces change
  + Manages ambiguity and complexity
  + Thinks and acts strategically
  + Works collaboratively with others
* Demonstrates the core UNICEF values of:
  + Care
  + Respect
  + Integrity
  + Trust
  + Accountability

**12. SELECTION PROCESS (tick one):**

**(A) Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)**

Interested candidates are required to submit the following documents as part of their application for the consultancy:

1. An updated CV, demonstrating all the requirements stated above
2. A cover letter (max 2 pages) outlining understanding of the scope and activities, motivation to undertake it and demonstrating fit for the assignment
3. A recent writing sample (up to 3 years old), which can include a professional publication, or a report or some other writing piece completed as part of their professional work. Where a writing piece has several authors, the applicant should specify which sections were written by her/him. *(Note by submitting a writing sample, the consultant confirms this is their original work. If it is found not to be original work, this will be grounds for non-selection.)*
4. One reference letter from a previous supervisor

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to participate in an interview, which will seek to verify relevant professional experience, as well as test technical knowledge and the UNICEF competencies listed above.

The consultant will be selected as per the criteria outlined below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA** | **MAX POINTS** | **MIN POINTS** |
| Educational qualifications | 15 |  |
| Relevant professional experience:   * Required number of years responsible for conducting and leading research and evaluation in India and internationally (5) * Experience in designing and managing impact evaluations and development evaluations (3) * Experience with different research and evaluation designs (experimental, quasi- and non-experimental), and experience with quantitative and qualitative data analysis (7) * Experience in analytical writing and producing high-quality standard reports and/or publications (5) | 20 |  |
| Quality of written sample of previous work | 15 |  |
| Reference letter from previous supervisor (within the past 3 years) demonstrating experience and skills required | 5 |  |
| **Marks for shortlisting** | 55 | 44 |
| Interview   * Technical knowledge and awareness on evaluations * Interpersonal and communication skills * Motivation and professionalism | 15 | 12 |
| **TOTAL MARKS FOR TECHNICAL PROPOSAL** | 70 | 56 |
| **FINANCIAL PROPOSAL - PRICE**  30 point are allocated to the lowest priced proposal, based on day-rate. The financial scores of the other proposals will be in inverse proportion to the lowest price. | 30 |  |
| **TOTAL MARKS** | 100 |  |

***Candidates who score the minimum 56 marks out of 70 will be considered technically qualified and their financial offers will be opened***

**13. PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

Payment will be made on a monthly basis (THE WORK MONTH WOULD BE 21.75 DAYS PER MONTH EXCLUDING SATURDAY AND SUNDAYS), via submission of invoice approved by the Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist (Research). This is subject to submitting an approved monthly progress report by the Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist (Research).

*\* 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.*