**Terms of Reference**

**Consultancy title:** **Improve the quality of public policy documents through conducting an assessment of the current regulatory policy framework from evaluability perspectives and application of Theory of Change approach in strategic planning**

**Position type:** Individual Consultant (national)

**Location:** Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**Section/Division/Duty Station:** Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation / Programme/UNICEF Moldova

**Categories:** Strategic planning /Policy development / Evaluation

**Duration:** 50 working days – August to December 2023

**Location:** Chisinau, Moldova

**About UNICEF**

If you are a committed, creative professional and are passionate about making a lasting difference for children, the world's leading children's rights organization would like to hear from you. For 70 years, UNICEF has been working on the ground in 190 countries and territories to promote children's survival, protection and development. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments. UNICEF has over 12,000 staff in more than 145 countries.

**Background**

The UNICEF Evaluation function helps UNICEF deliver results for children by fostering evidence-based decision-making. The UNICEF is a key actor in strengthening evaluation capacity at the country level. UNICEF supported delivery of the Executive Course for Evaluation leaders (ExCEL) for national partners and UNICEF staff and Moldova was among other countries who participated in the third cohort (March 2023) . The course is aimed to improve programmes and policies at national level and contribute to building a culture of evaluative thinking around the achievement of results for children and their families. As a follow up of the ExCEL course and in line with the agreement with the State Chancellery of the Republic of Moldova, UNICEF Moldova will provide support to the Government to improve the

regulatory policy framework and increase the quality of public policy documents, including child-focused strategies, programmes and action plans. Strengthening the national capacity for evidence-based policymaking is also one of UNICEF Moldova priority as outlined in 2023-2027 Country Programme Document.

This Terms of Reference is developed for consultancy services to improve the quality of public policy documents through conducting an assessment of the current regulatory policy framework from evaluability perspectives and application of Theory of change approach in strategic planning, piloting of suggested adjustments and elaboration of proposals to modify the normative and methodological framework. (i.e. proposals for amendments to the Government Decision no. 386 and to the relevant Methodological Guidelines).

In 2020, the Government Decision no. 386/2020 on the planning, elaboration, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policy documents, which laid the foundations for the new national strategic planning framework. Subsequently, the methodological framework facilitating the implementation of the new strategic planning framework was also developed. In addition, the Methodological Guidelines for ex-ante evaluation of the impact of public policies and for the mid-term and ex-post evaluation of public policies have been updated and implemented. [[1]](#footnote-2)

Thus, the current normative and methodological framework defines the type, structure and content of public policy documents, concretizes the stages of planning, elaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation at the level of central public administration, establishes procedures for evaluating draft public policy documents, according to predetermined criteria that measure the quality and compliance of projects of those documents according to a checklist.

At the same time, the evaluations of public policy documents carried out by the Government with the support of partners during the last period, applying the above-mentioned methodologies e.g. Evaluation of the Civil Society Development Strategy for 2018-2020 and the Action Plan for its implementation , Evaluation of National Human Rights Plan for 2018-2022 and others, to highlight the need for interventions to improve the existing regulatory and methodological framework. In particular, the recommendations of the evaluation reports signaled the need to develop elements related to the "Theory of Change" in the process of developing and analyzing public policies.

Additionally, in the process of evaluating public policy documents that are in the middle of the implementation period or already completed, the problem of the impossibility of fully applying the evaluation methodologies was signaled due to the lack or insufficiency of the basic elements used in the evaluation process, this constraint generating the need to achieve an expertise of the normative and methodological framework for the elaboration of public policy documents, which would identify the provisions that need to be developed and consolidated in order to ensure their subsequent evaluability.

**Purpose of the consultancy**

The purpose of this consultancy is to assess existing Regulatory framework from evaluability perspectives, paying special attention to the elements of Theory of changes, to provide recommendation and pilot suggested adjustments by applying to the Mid-term Human Rights Programme, with particular focus on Child Rights . Finally, the consultant is expected to elaborate proposals to modify the normative and methodological framework. ( i.e. proposals for amendments to the Government Decision no. 386 and to the relevant Methodological Guidelines), to be agreed with the State Chancellery.

Evaluability Assessment is an assessment of the extent to which an intervention or programme can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion.[[2]](#footnote-3) Current exercise is planned to increase evaluability of all policy documents and adjustments of existing Guidelines in line with UNICEF Evaluability Assessment Guidance [[3]](#footnote-4).

The following evaluability parameter and key questions will be taken into consideration while conducting the Assessment:

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| **Evaluability Parameter** | **Key questions** |
| Assess the Regulatory framework on relevance logic and coherence of results structures, alignment to country context and coherence of the sector / national development programme | Does the Regulatory framework specify a clear theory of change/logic model? Does it address the problems identified? |
| Is the results framework coherently articulated and aligned to country context and national priorities? Do the outputs, outcomes and overall goal follow the result chain logic?  The results chains are coherent, logical, with clearly articulated statements  Are results statements and the results framework taking into account equity considerations to programming and gender-responsive? |
| Are the results clear and realistic? Are they measurable (quantitatively or qualitatively)? |
| Are intended beneficiary groups clearly identified? |
| To what extent are results and indicators measurable? |
| How well have key assumptions, risks and mitigation strategies been specified?  Have assumptions about the role of partners, government and UNICEF been made explicit?  Are there plausible plans to monitor these in any practicable way? |
| Assess the adequacy and validity of the indicators, tools and systems for monitoring, measuring and verifying results reflected in the Regulatory framework | Does the Regulatory framework specify capacity to provide data for monitoring and evaluation? |
| Are baselines in place for indicators? |
| Does the Regulatory framework specify a monitoring system to gather and systematize the information with defined responsibilities, sources and periodicity? |
| Do indicators and targets take into consideration equity considerations to programming?  Are indicators and targets gender-responsive? |
| What are the likely costs of such data collection and analysis (costs in terms of the time of evaluation staff, programme managers and staff and partners)? |
| Is there a complete set of documents available? Are these documents accessible and well organized? |
| Are there any data gaps identifies when developed policy document? If so, are there any measures planned to improve data availability and address data gaps’ |
| Assess the adequacy of financial resources are clearly specified to meet the expected results of public policy documents in related Regulatory framework | Are the resources aligned with the results? |
| Are data and systems in place to allow the Government to assess the adequacy of resources to achieve intended results? |
| Are there resources set aside for evaluation? |
| Planning Evaluations | Is there demand for evaluation clearly specified in Regulatory framework? If not, why? And are demands realistic given public policy documents design, budget and data availability? |
| Is there adequate, monitoring, evaluation and learning in place for the sector/ public policy documents to be evaluated? |
| Does the Regulatory framework specify a clear plan and budget for evaluation? Is it clear who will manage the evaluation? |

**Accountabilities, related duties/tasks and expected results**

The consultant will review existing normative documents and guidelines and conduct interviews with relevant government partners to tailor evaluability assessment checklist[[4]](#footnote-5)  and to provide the answers on the following:

1. Public policy documents Design (as described in a Theory of Change, Logical Framework or narrative) – clarity, relevance, validity and reliability etc.;

2. Information availability - availability of, baseline measures, indicators, gender disaggregation etc.;

3. Institutional context (practicality and  utility).

The Regulatory framework will be analyzed through evaluability criteria. The report will incorporate key findings and recommendations to adjust the Regulatory framework that will be piloted by applying them to the Mid-term Human Rights Programme, with particular focus on Child Rights.

Based on the results of the piloting, the final version of evaluability criteria, including Theory of change approach, will be fine-tuned and proposals to amend the regulatory and methodological framework will be elaborated and agreed by the State Chancellery.

**Key deliverables and delivery dates/timeline [[5]](#footnote-6)**

Stage 1: Preparatory stage: desk review of existing documents, elaboration of methodology of the assessment (questionnaires , face-to-face interviews, FGD etc.) and detailed workplan

August – September 2023 ( 15 working days)

* First payment ( 10 working days) - 30% upon submission of Assessment work plan and methodology

Stage 2: Data gathering, analysis and Report writing

September-October 2023 (20 working days)

Stage 3: Piloting of suggested adjustments by applying to the Mid-term Human Rights Programme, with particular focus on Child Rights

October - November 2023 (10 working days)

* Second payment (30 working days) - 40% upon submission of mature draft of Assessment report and Summary of the results of the piloting

Stage 4: Finalization of Assessment and development of proposals to modify the regulatory and methodological framework

November – December 2023 (10 working days)

* Third (final) payment (10 working days) – 30%, upon submission of Final assessment report and proposals to modify the regulatory and methodological framework

Total – 50 working days – August to December 2023

Note: consultation and preparation for approval of recommended adjustments to the regulatory framework will be conducted by the State Chancellery in January – March 2024

Reporting

The Consultant will work under direct supervision of the Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist . UNICEF will regularly communicate with the Consultant and provide feedback on deliverables performance and all other necessary support to achieve objectives of the assignment, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to the Consultant performance and the quality of work. All the activities and deliverables undertaken by the Consultant shall be discussed and planned in consultation with UNICEF.

All products will be subject to UNICEF and the State Chancellery review before approval. All deliverables need to be submitted in electronic format (Word, Excel, Visual etc,) in Romanian.

**Branding, communication and audiences**

All resources developed will remain the property of UNICEF. These resources may be utilized for other purposes, now, in the future and/or with other partners with which UNICEF collaborates.

**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.

**Qualifications**

Education:

* Advanced university degree (Masters or higher) in the social sciences is required (i.e. sociology, demography, psychology, political science, social policy or economics), public policy, public administration, international development, or in an area relevant to UNICEF’s cross-sectoral work (e.g. Child Rights, Social Inclusion etc.);

Knowledge / Experience:

* Minimum four years of progressively responsible professional experience and demonstrated track record of having undertaken and led substantive programming and research on education, inclusion etc.;
* Strong Results Based Management (RBM) and evaluation skills, particularly in evaluation of national programmes, designing and managing results-based programmes/projects on education, inclusion or any other cross cutting programmes, required;
* Experience in working with international organizations (working with UNICEF/other UN Agencies highly preferred);

Language Proficiency:

* Fluency in written and oral communication in Romanian;
* Advanced knowledge in English will be an asset;

Skills:

* Strong writing and communication skills especially in team environments is highly preferred;
* Ability to work independently with confidence and self-motivation is necessary;
* Highly organized and proactive with timely production of materials is necessary.

**Requirements**

* Completed profile in UNICEF's e-Recruitment system; with copy of academic credentials;
* Financial proposal will include daily/monthly rate (in MDL) to undertake the terms of reference.
* Indication of your availability to undertake the terms of reference.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed satisfactory 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.

The contract does not allow payment of off-hours, medical insurance, taxes, and sick leave. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of the payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/output is incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet the agreed deadlines.

**Work location, official travel involved and support provided by UNICEF**

Considering the time period for implementation of the assignment, majority of the planned tasks could be done remotely, including face-to-face meetings will be possible. Office space will not be provided.

UNICEF will provide the Consultant with relevant policies, documents, reports etc. , as well as facilitate the contact with relevant stakeholders and partners. UNICEF will ensure timely feedback to all deliverables to be presented by the Consultant.

**Child Safeguarding**

Is this project/assignment considered as “[Elevated Risk Role](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/DocumentLibrary1/Guidance%20on%20Identifying%20Elevated%20Risk%20Roles_finalversion.pdf?CT=1590792470221&OR=ItemsView)” from a child safeguarding perspective?

   YES     NO      

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/SitePages/Amendments-to-the-Recruitment-Guidance.aspx) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/DHR-ChildSafeguarding/DocumentLibrary1/Child%20Safeguarding%20FAQs%20and%20Updates%20Dec%202020.pdf)

**Ethical considerations**

Potential consultant will need to agree to meet the standards set in the [UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis](https://www.unicef.org/supply/files/ATTACHMENT_IV-UNICEF_Procedure_for_Ethical_Standards.PDF). No major ethical, cultural or organizational risks are foreseen. The Consultant should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty while interacting with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Furthermore, the Consultant should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information. and use documents and information provided only for the tasks related to these terms of reference.

As per the [DHR Procedure on consultants and individual contractors](https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/portals/RF/Regulatory%20Framework%20Library/DHR%20Procedure%20on%20Consultants%20-%20DHR_PROCEDURE_2018_005.pdf), together with the Notification letter, the Consultant will be sent the [link on Agora](https://agora.unicef.org/course/view.php?id=15620) containing UNICEF 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. The selected candidate must complete the applicable mandatory online courses on UNICEF’s learning platform prior to signature of contract. All certificates should be presented as part of the contract.

**Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and advance to the next stage of the selection process**

**For every Child, you demonstrate...**

UNICEF's values of Care, Respect, Integrity, Trust, Accountability, and Sustainability (CRITAS). To view our competency framework, please visit [here](https://www.unicef.org/careers/get-prepared#Values).

UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages all candidates, irrespective of gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality, culture, appearance, socio-economic status, ability, age, religious, and ethnic backgrounds, to apply to become a part of the organization.

UNICEF has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNICEF, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. UNICEF also adheres to strict child safeguarding principles. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks, and will be expected to adhere to these standards and principles.

1. [Policy coordination and strategic planning](https://cancelaria.gov.md/ro/advanced-page-type/domeniile-de-competenta) the State Chancellery of the Republic of Moldova [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. DFID Working paper, Rick Davies [‘Evaluability Assessment’](https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/themes/evaluability-assessment)  [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [Evaluability Assessments Guidance.pdf (unicef.org)](https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/media/1506/file/Evaluability%20Assessments%20Guidance.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. An evaluability assessment [checklist](https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/An%20Evaluability%20Assessment%20checklist.docx), Rick Davis [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Detailed deliverables and exact deadlines will be mutually agreed upon contract signature [↑](#footnote-ref-6)