

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Bangkok, Thailand
Vacancy Announcement 2015/067

Issue Date: 23 November 2015

Closing Date: 6 December 2015

Consultant – Thematic Paper on Preventing Violence against Children

The Child Protection Section, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF EAPRO) is seeking an individual consultant to produce a thematic paper on preventing violence against children with a specific focus on the Asia-Pacific region (covering South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific). This paper will provide the basis for discussions at the third High Level Meeting (HLM3) during 7-9 November 2015 in Kuala Lumpur.

Work Assignment:

Objectives of Assignment

As part of the new sustainable development agenda, the world's governments have made a commitment to ensuring that all people live in peaceful, just and inclusive societies. The theme of "protecting children from violence" is situated with reference to Sustainable Development Goal 16, "to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels"; and specifically in relation to its target 16.2 (end abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence and torture against children). There are a further four goals that also include violence-related targets (Goals 4, 5, 8, 11) with there being 8 targets, in total, that address violence. Reflecting the 2006 UN Study on violence against children, there is clearly an underlying principle that no violence against children is justifiable; and that all forms of violence are preventable. The purpose of this paper is to translate this aspiration into a compelling agenda for action in Asia Pacific, and identify the role of South-South cooperation in supporting its realization

In 2010, the High Level Meeting (HLM1) in Beijing highlighted the serious child protection challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, and noted the impact of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect on the individual child's development and capacities, but also the longer-term costs of such impacts to the socio-economic development of society as a whole. The Beijing Declaration thus committed participating countries to building and strengthening adequately-resourced national child protection and welfare systems and mechanisms which include the prevention of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Since Beijing, progress has advanced in strengthening the availability of data on the prevalence, costs and consequences of violence against children in the region. Furthermore, there is a growing portfolio of global learning on promising interventions that prevent violence. This evidence is compiled in a 2014 UNICEF report, "Ending Violence against Children: Six Strategies for Action". However, from a regional perspective, experiences in preventing violence have not been compiled or analysed.

In order to assist Governments in the region to design strategies to prevent violence in the lives of children that are sensitive to national and regional contexts, the objective of the background paper is:

- Review of the extent of the problem and any specificities related to violence that are present in Asia-Pacific. While this is not expected to be exhaustive the intention is to set the stage.
- Based upon global learning and current Asia-Pacific responses to violence, develop a conceptual framework that defines the range of strategies and levels of intervention
- Review a selection of documented programmes and initiatives in the region that are illustrative of promising practices to prevent violence, abuse, and exploitation
- Review select country prevention and response actions to different types of violence, documenting different child protection system approaches to addressing violence
- Recommend an overall strategy to national governments for the testing and scale up of an appropriate range of prevention programmes that address the underlying drivers and risk factors for violence.

The above must be cognizant of the socio-cultural reality in the region, including the social acceptance (or not) of violence. These may be at the individual, community or societal level. It should draw attention to any ‘unique’ practices, positive and negative, that are present in the region.

Background to the topic

Much progress has been made in the last decade in the developing of national child protection systems in the Asia Pacific region. Notably, national legislation to address child protection violations has been increasingly brought in line with international standards (UNICEF, 2015); and specialized services in the social welfare, justice and health sectors have been established in most countries. However, these child protection systems remain largely reactive in nature, responding to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect only after it has been detected (ECPAT International et al, 2014). There has also been a struggle to support the whole system distinct from the just the public sector aspect (CP system mappings in Bhutan, Pakistan, Maldives). Overall the attention has been on response services (WHO: 2014), with government investments tending to focus on this, leaving many proactive and preventative protection programmes to others that may not have the necessary capacities for effective coverage;; and coordination between the preventative and response components is frequently weak.

There is increasing evidence that the economic burden of violence against children is quite significant. These include the direct expenditure required to manage cases - the costs to the justice system, of medical and health care for victims, of social work and out-of-home care. More substantial are the indirect costs due to the long term impacts of violence on the individual and on society. There is now a solid evidence base linking experience of childhood violence on physical health and health risk behaviors; on mental health outcomes; on eventual perpetration of violence; and on education and employment (UNICEF 2012). In East Asia and the Pacific, this economic burden is (conservatively) estimated at around \$209 billion, or close to 2% of region’s GDP (Fang et al., 2015). Violence also costs by limiting a person’s potential contribution to economic benefits (Rabi, 2014).

Preventing violence means addressing its root causes. Following a social-ecological model, these may include risk and protective factors at the level of the individual; of personal relationships with the family, friends, intimate partners, and peers; of the community contexts in which social relationships occur; and of societal factors that encourage or inhibit violence. A comprehensive strategy to prevent and reduce violence must therefore address the situations of risk at these various levels, within their own socio-cultural “drivers”. (http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/SEM_Framework-a.pdf)

A child protection systems approach (Wulzyn et al: 2010, Gilbert et al: 2011) has increasingly been adopted as an effective way to prevent and respond to violence against children (UNICEF: 2008, 2012), shifting from a vertical issues approach. This recognizes that a child may be exposed to multiple protection risks and therefore multiple actors could provide different responses. A more holistic approach, systems allow for an increasing focus on prevention, which is directed at the entire population to prevent violence before it occurs.

Addressing root causes also means identifying underlying “drivers” of violence — those community and society-level factors in which child and family interventions are embedded. There is recognition the widespread social acceptance of violence is one of the key challenges. Social norms are what define how the system operates, as reflected in, for example, laws, service provision, educational programmes, and even in how the system actors interact. These may result in a child protection response that is protective, such as raising the age of marriage to 18, or a negative such as the permission to use corporal punishment in alternative care as a disciplinary method. Social norms may undermine or promote the effectiveness of the child protection system, to prevent and respond to violence against children. Supporting protective social norms and positive social change is therefore central to this development agenda.

In order to guide decision-makers and relevant actors, UNICEF has compiled case studies that illustrate six strategies for action to end violence against children. These six strategies include:

1. Supporting parents, caregivers and families
2. Helping children and adolescents manage risks and challenges
3. Changing attitudes and social norms that encourage violence and discrimination
4. Promoting and providing support services for children
5. Implementing laws and policies that protect children
6. Carrying out data collection and research

The World Health Organisation and the US Center for Disease Control have identified similar frameworks that identify programme strategies that are consistent with UNICEF (WHO 2010; Hillis et al., 2015). This indicates global consensus on what needs to be done to prevent and reduce violence. The World Health Organisation undertook a systematic review of evaluations of child maltreatment prevention interventions around the world (Mikton & Butchart, 2009) which found considerable evidence of the effectiveness of a broad range of interventions, however programmes in the Asia-Pacific region have not been sufficiently documented, and were excluded from the review. It also recently released a review on the status of violence prevention (WHO: 2015) which notes potential protection risks in countries in the region.

Key Research Questions

- What is the currently known on the prevalence, scope and forms of violence against children in Asia-Pacific?
- Summarise the state of evidence on the effectiveness of programmes that prevent violence against children: What are the opportunities to prevent violence against children in the region?
- Understanding of drivers of violence: How should global learning about risk factors adapt to diverse socio-cultural contexts, such those found across the Asia-Pacific?
- What would be an appropriate range interventions to address these drivers and risk factors?
- What are the current modalities of provision of proactive and preventive child and family interventions in Asia-Pacific, and what are the key trends?
- How adaptable are child protection systems in the region to incorporate and scale up proactive and preventive child and family interventions?
- What should Governments put in place to measure progress towards achievement of SDG 16.2, and related SDG targets?
- What priority actions are required of Governments in order to develop and resource and appropriate range of proactive and preventive child and family interventions?
- How can South-South cooperation support Governments in realizing this vision?

Suggested Methodology

- The Regional Advisors of Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) and EAPRO will direct the consultant to key reference materials
- In consultation with the Regional Advisors, the consultant will identify a sample (15-20) interventions/programmes from the Asia-Pacific region that (a) illustrate the range of preventive interventions at various levels and in response to various situations of risk; (b) are broadly geographically representative of the sub-regions in Asia Pacific; c) as far as possible are well-documented and are evaluated with a strong design, showing some evidence of a preventive effect
- Through exchanges with UNICEF Country office staff and counterparts, complete information in order to have a comprehensive overview of each intervention/programme. This part may include a review of ways in which a child moves through the care system – from prevention to response.

Work Schedule and Expected deliverables:

Deliverable	Indicative Timeline	Role of Consultant / firm	Role of UNICEF
Inception Report	1 January 2015 (TBC)	<p>Inception report should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Draft Workplan (chronogram) • A suggested methodology for the desk review and qualitative data collection, analysis and writing (and proposed interview schedule if necessary) • Proposed research questions • Documentation List for Desk Review • Proposed budget. To mitigate the risks associated to exchange rate fluctuations, institutions will be requested to submit their financial offers in local currency for services to be hired and paid locally and in US Dollars for any services hired and paid abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teleconference call with Contract Manager recommended • Initial documentation provided to consultant • Review of Inception report by Steering Committee
First Draft of Thematic Paper	TBC 2016	First draft presented to the informal Technical Review Group for initial review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract manager will coordinate review of the thematic paper, consolidating comments • Conference call recommended to ensure integration of all feedback
Presentation at Preparatory Meeting	May 2016	Preparation of presentation	Support presentation to Steering Committee
Peer Review	May - July 2016	Dissemination of draft through peers and integration of comments/feedback	Establishment of peer review group. Facilitation of review

Final Draft of Thematic Paper	TBC 2016	Final draft integrating comments presented to Technical Review Group for review	
Final Report and Archive	TBC 2016 (Aug latest)	<p>Consultant/firm is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a 2-3 page final report summarizing the work completed and the lessons learned with regards to the implementation of the contract - A Record of all interviews, contact persons and contact details as well as any relevant notes and/or Transcripts of interviews 	Contract manager reviews the consultant in VISION

Estimated Duration of Contract: 15 December 2015 – August 2016

Official Travel: The consultant will work from a remote location. The consultant may be required to visit the country or regional offices. The consultant may be also required to present their findings at the Preparatory Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, 10 May 2016.

Qualifications or Specialized Knowledge/Experience Required:

- Proven track record of delivering high quality research, analysis and/or documentation for publication;
- Technical specialization in the field of child protection, child protection systems and evidence-based policy advocacy;
- Geographic knowledge (in Asia Pacific including South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific);
- Experience working with UNICEF and/or the United Nations system;
- English fluency and strong oral and written communications skills.

Interested candidates are requested to submit CV or P11, 2 references, a relevant sample, availability, and proposed monthly professional fee in USD **by 6 December 2015** to hrbangkok@unicef.org

Only short listed candidates will be notified.