

## Technical Assistance in support of Operationalizing the Central Authority for Inter-country Adoptions in Ghana

### Terms of Reference

<b>Title</b>	<b>Operationalizing the Central Adoption Authority for Ghana</b>
<b>Type of contract</b>	International individual consultancy
<b>Purpose</b>	To provide technical assistance in advancing the operationalization of the Central Authority for in-country and inter-country adoptions.
<b>Expected fee</b>	To be determined
<b>Location</b>	Accra with possible travel to the regions
<b>Duration</b>	6 months
<b>Start Date</b>	February 2016
<b>Reporting to</b>	Iddris Abdallah, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF Ghana
<b>Budget Code/WBS No.</b>	WBS/1620/AO/004/001/002/005
<b>Project and Activity Code</b>	Child Protection Work Plan, Activity 2.5

#### 1 Background.

Since the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by Ghana in 1990, the country has made some significant progress towards the realization and protection of children's rights with the passage of a number of legal frameworks. Notable amongst them are the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560), the Juvenile Justice Act, 2003 (Act 653), the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732) and the Human Trafficking Act 2005 (694).

The last five years has also witnessed a spate of protective measures initiated by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) with UNICEF's support aimed at addressing violence, abuse and exploitation of children. Key amongst these is the launch in 2015 of the new Child and Family Welfare Policy, a landmark document which seeks to foster a more protective environment for children and provides for Ghana an overarching framework for coordinating child and family welfare services at both national and subnational levels.

Government has also over the past years been spearheading wider adoption and foster care reforms aimed at having a well-regulated alternative care system for children deprived of parental care. In pursuance of this objective, the MoGCSP with support from UNICEF set up a Technical Working Group (TWG) with representatives from the Department of Social Development (DSD), the Department of Children, the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General's Department, and some Civil Society Organizations. The TWG was tasked to review and transform into regulations, a set of adoption/foster guidelines which were developed in 2010, ensuring that these were compliant with the general principles and procedures of the 1993 Hague Conventions. The group also came out with a proposed organogram for the Central Adoption Authority (CAA), delineating broad responsibilities for staff, and showing how the Authority sits within the Department of Social Development and the MoGCSP.

The following key designations and the staffing requirements for each of the units of the CAA were proposed:

- (i) Head of CA (1)
- (ii) Deputy Head (1)
- (iii) Admin officer (Secretary) (1)
- (iv) Staff responsible for Archives (1),
- (v) Data Base Manager (1),
- (vi) Accreditation, surveillance and contacts with adoption agencies (2)
- (vii) Receiving and Filing officers(2)

A summary of notable outcomes accomplished by Government with UNICEF's support include:

- A final draft Regulations for Adoption, Foster Care and for the accreditation of Adoption Agencies
- A draft proposal to Cabinet for the review of the Children's Act to pave way for coming into effect of the new regulations
- A draft Cabinet Memorandum for Accession to the 1993 Hague Convention

As the country draws closer towards having a functional Central Adoption Authority, a head for the Central Adoption Authority has been appointed and with UNICEF's support, an Adoption Procedural Manual for in-country and inter-country adoptions has been developed. The manual serves both as *Service Standards* for the Central Authority and a step-by-step guidance to adoption practitioners to ensure that adoptions are managed in a more transparent, efficient and child centred manner.

The reform process has reached the stage of building the human resource capacity of adoption service providers. A first round of training for staff of the Central Authority, Regional Directors/Programme Heads of the DSD and ten Regional Births and Deaths Registrars on the Adoption Procedural Manual was completed in October 2015. Institutions to be targeted in future trainings will include the Police and the Judiciary.

As part of the wider reform processes, efforts are also being explored to encourage and promote on a case by case basis, formal family-based foster care for children deprived of parental care. Formal foster-care is increasingly being considered as a viable alternative especially where going back to the family by a child is not an option because of an abuse, and for those in privately-run residential facilities or so call orphanages to ensure that they live in a more supportive and caring environment that promote their full and harmonious development. The Department of Social Development (DSD) is receiving support to deinstitutionalize and return children in orphanages to their care givers or have them placed with foster parents where this is not possible. In an effort to accelerate this, a consultant has been contracted to facilitate the development of culturally appropriate communication messages for reaching out to the various stakeholder. The prime objective is to create public awareness, win hearts and minds, help change public mentality and to encourage society to embrace family and community based alternatives.

Providers of formal foster care services in Ghana are mostly limited to privately-run residential facilities (orphanages) by NGO who develop, organise and fund their programmes independently.

Despite the progress made over the years, a lot more still remains to be done to advance ongoing initiatives at having a fully functional Central Adoption Authority that ensures adequate safeguards for children being placed on adoption. It is for this reason that the Government is requesting for technical assistance to accelerate efforts towards having a well-regulated alternative care for Ghanaian children. It is expected that the consultant will be working closely with the MoGCSP, the Head of the CAA, Ag. Director of the Department of Social Development and key staff of the Department of Social Development as well as with the high level TWG.

## **2. Justification for a consultant for the assignment**

UNICEF Ghana in partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection is looking to engage the services of an individual with specific skills, considerable experience and understanding of the functioning of Central Authority and formal foster care for children in need of care and protection. This assignment requires full time work for an extended period of time which is currently not available within the UNICEF Child Protection Programme team and Government partners.

## **3. Scope of work**

This assignment, is expected to be of the duration of 6 months and is anticipated to commence in January 2016.

Under the overall guidance of the UNICEF Child Protection Specialist (Social Welfare), and in close collaboration with the Chief Director of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and the Ag. Director of the Department of Social Development, the consultant will undertake the following:

1. In line with capacity-building plan which seeks to address knowledge gaps in technical expertise of the staff of the DSD, the consultant shall offer basic and advanced training to enhance the overall capacity of the staff of the Central Authority and other relevant stakeholders. The Adoption Manual will serve as useful tool for the training of relevant stakeholders.
2. Provide support to the Ministry to facilitate Ghana's accession to the Hague Convention. This will require working closely with the Technical Working Group, the Attorney General's Department and the Parliamentary sub Committee on Gender.
3. Provide technical support in the identification and training/orientation of potential foster parents.

4. Support the establishment of a national data base on adoption and foster care<sup>1</sup>. Such data base should be established to facilitate tracking and monitoring of cases of adoption and foster care of children, location, gender, age, country of adoption (in case of inter-country adoption). The data base shall effectively link information on children in residential homes with information on adoption and foster care.
5. Support the development of public information materials to inform parents, care-givers, Embassies, Government Ministries, departments and agencies and the public at large about the new standards and practices in relation to adoption and foster care of children.<sup>2</sup> Note that this shall be undertaken in line with the new Child and Family Welfare Policy and the Communication Strategy on child protection which includes a component on promotion of family-based care (in lieu of institutional care) for children.

#### 4. Deliverables

Activity	Deliverables	Duration for completing the task
1. Facilitate the provision of needed human and logistical support to the CA	Support in mobilizing both human and material resources required to make CA fully and effectively implement its functions, provided.	1 month
2. Capacity-building of staff of the Central Authority and other relevant stakeholders	Basic and advance training in line with existing training plan undertaken for relevant staff using the Adoption Manual.	1 month
3. Facilitate the identification and training of potential foster parents.	National Register of identified and trained foster parents developed.	2 months
4. Support the setting up of National database on adoption, foster care and children in institutional care.	Identified ICT/Software company given the necessary information for the conceptualization, design and development of a functional data base for the CA.	1 month
5. Conceptualisation and development of public information materials on adoption and foster care and ensure where necessary, the information materials build on and complement the work of the C4D Consultant.	Public information materials on adoption and foster care practices for parents, care-givers, Embassies, Government Ministries, departments and agencies developed and accepted.	1 month

<sup>1</sup> Note that the consultant will not be expected to cover the cost of the actual set up of a data base but support the process with technical advice and guidance.

<sup>2</sup> The consultant will not be responsible for the cost of the actual production of the materials, but will be responsible for the conceptualization and technical content of the information materials.

	<b>Total time</b>	<b>6 months</b>
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## 5. Supervision and reporting

The consultant will be working closely with the Head of the Central Authority with formal supervision provided by the UNICEF Child Protection Specialist, Social Welfare.

The consultant will submit monthly up-dates in writing to the Ag Director and the UNICEF Child Protection Specialist, Social Welfare.

There will be regular briefings to Chief Director and Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection and Child Protection Specialist-UNICEF.

## 6. Fees and Payment Schedule

The contract amount will be negotiated with successful candidate

Proposed payment schedule:

30% of fee upon completion of deliverable 1&2

40% of fee upon completion of deliverable 3&4

30 % of fee upon completion of deliverable 5

## 7. Timeframe

The total effective work time under this proposed assignment is 6 months as indicated above with an expected start date in January 2016.

## 8. Expected Qualifications and Experience

The desired person should have:

- Advanced university degree in law, criminal justice, social work, organizational reform; child protection or other relevant field;
- At least 8 years relevant work experience, inclusive of organizational development and reform on social issues, preferably on child protection.
- Excellent experience and knowledge of adoption issues, including knowledge of the Hague Convention and its requirement. Previous work experience from Central Authorities of good standing is highly recommended.
- Knowledge and understanding of international human rights laws and standards on adoptions and HC-1993 and experience in development of organization manual.
- Experience in developing organizational development related documents such as JD and having an understanding of Civil Service Structures and processes.
- Ability to draft clearly and concisely ideas and concepts in written and oral form;
- Excellent communication and drafting skills in English, both orally and in writing.
- Strong interpersonal skills and experience in training and capacity-building initiatives and advisory functions.

## 9 General Conditions:

1. The consultant will work from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in Accra. It should be noted that the consultant is expected to arrange for his/her own computer facilities and transport facilities for commuting to office.

2. The consultant should provide his/her own stationery and office materials/ consumables – computer, data storage devices, paper etc.
3. Field visits can expected for this assignment to regions. UNICEF will cover the cost for such field visits and arrange for transportation where feasible.
4. The consultant/s will not be entitled to payment of overtime. All remuneration must be within the contract agreement.

**10. Policy both parties should be aware of:**

- Under the consultancy agreements, a month is defined as 21 working days. Consultants are not paid for weekends or public holidays.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant or Contractor.
- For international consultants outside the duty station, signed contracts must be sent by fax or email. Signed contract copy or written agreement must be received by the office before travel commences (in the case of individual consultants, TA must be issued).
- Consultants will not have supervisory responsibilities or authority on UNICEF budget.
- Consultant will be required to sign the Health statement for consultants/Individual contractor prior to taking up the assignment, and to document that they have appropriate health insurance, including Medical Evacuation.
- The Form 'Designation, change or revocation of beneficiary' must be completed by the consultant upon arrival, at the HR Section

**Application Procedure:**

**Interested individuals who meet the minimum requirements should please submit their application (indicating the title of the consultancy in the subject line) with a copy of their CV and P11 form to,**

**'hrqhana@unicef.org' by Friday 29 January 2016**

**Candidates are also required to indicate their fees for the services to be provided in dollars. The fee should be expressed as a monthly rate.**