

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SERVICE CONTRACTING

Assignment	Consultancy on the Development of School Readiness Resource Pack for Children ages 3-4 years and their Parents/Caregivers.
Location	Home-based
Duration	8 months
Partner	Makani Partners (ICCS, MoSD, JRF, YBC, and EAC)
Estimate number of working days	120 days
Reporting to	Social Protection Specialist and work closely with Child Protection (ECD) Specialist

1. JUSTIFICATION/BACKGROUND

The scale of the COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented and while children are not the face of the crisis, they are the hidden victims. As per the United Nations Secretary General's report, one of the key areas that is predicted to suffer long term impact is early childhood development due to a lack of adequate nutrition, stimulation, protection and increased exposure to adversity—leaving young children at increased risk of toxic stress and impaired cognitive development, in addition to contributing to widening the equity gap in terms of providing all children with the best start of life.

Lack of access to early learning for young children, especially the most vulnerable ones, means that subsequently they won't be prepared to enter primary school; will more likely become low achievers in school; and not having acquired relevant skills, including life skills needed to succeed in education, life, and employment¹.

UNICEF is accelerating its efforts to respond to this crisis building on its ECD programmatic approach and lessons learnt from the emergent response to COVID-19 at the onset of the crisis. The COVID-19 is no longer a short-term crisis for early childhood development; therefore its response requires specific focus on addressing the critical needs of parents and young children who have found themselves living in a new reality, in many cases confined to their homes without their normal access to services, which for many, comes on top of their already limited access to health, protection, learning, play, care and parenting support programmes.

UNICEF deems this an acute and long-term crisis of care and learning, where families require significant support to cope with stress and continue their children's care and learning. Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence also suggests the current COVID-19 crisis may be a good opportunity to build on existing gaps in ECD provision and parenting skills and introduce techniques that may have a longer-term impact that could extend beyond coronavirus pandemic.

¹ Heckman, J. J. (2012). Invest in early childhood development: Reduce deficits, strengthen the economy. *The Heckman Equation*, 7, 1-2.

Considering all the above, UNICEF Jordan Country Office aims to create a resource pack—supplementing the Parent and Child Programme². The current circumstance where young children and their families are all confined at home, makes it more pressing to ensure that homes are not only safe places for children, but also stimulating for young children to develop and be ready for school. However, it is equally important to engage and support parents/caregivers of pre-primary children at home, while recognizing that a parent/caregiver is not a trained teacher. Therefore, supports for parents/ caregivers should be built into the offerings, through guides for them to reflect on children’s learning, and opportunities to provide feedback or seek further support.

In view of all the above, and with the aim of strengthening children’s school readiness³ and holistic development, UNICEF Jordan is planning to draw on expertise that exists in the field of Early Childhood Development, Early Childhood Education, and Parenting Support Programming to undertake the assignment outlined in this TOR. Through this consultancy, UNICEF will be able to provide an interactive resource pack that promotes the participation of parents/ caregivers in the process to support their children to achieve their developmental potential in safe, stimulating and caring environments.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The goal of this assignment is to protect gains and promote achievement of results for children through the provision of quality early learning opportunities and parenting support, especially during times of crises, such as COVID-19. Therefore, UNICEF will work with the contractor towards ensuring that parents are able to provide quality learning for their children, including stimulation/play-based learning for children aged 3-4 years—enabling their growth and development, even when their movement and normal life routines are disrupted, and when childcare, ECD centres and pre-schools are closed.

UNICEF will work with the contractor to develop the *Parent and Child Resource Pack*, which will offer a variety of age-appropriate educational and developmental content and material targeted for children aged 3-4 years, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged girls and boys, including children with disabilities, refugee children, and those living in ITs. Importantly, the resource pack is to be used in the presence and full participation of a child’s parent/ caregiver, whom should be equipped with information, knowledge and skills to support their young children’s development and learning at home. With that in mind, the objective of this assignment will be two-fold:

- I. **To improve children’s readiness for learning and development** through the provision of age and developmentally-appropriate activities that would elicit an interaction between the child and a range of learning experiences which can maximize the development outcomes for children, including being physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent, and able to learn.
- II. **To improve families’ readiness for school and ability to create a learning environment in the home**

²The Parent and Child Programme aims at enhancing children’s readiness for school, while strengthening positive parenting skills simultaneously. It targets children (4–5 years old) along with their parents or caregivers. The centre-based version of the PCP is implemented through 24 face-to-face sessions (2.5 hours each) over a period of 12 weeks. In response to COVID-19 outbreak, UNICEF supported setting up community-based WhatsApp groups for parents, which were facilitated by ECD facilitators and community volunteers. The content shared via WhatsApp was adapted from UNICEF’s parenting support programmes, and included age-appropriate home-based learning activities, children songs and stories, in addition to tips for parents on positive parenting and stress management. Each group had an assigned ECD facilitator, who was responsible for sending the daily content, posting probing follow up questions, and facilitating group and bilateral discussion with parents. UNICEF is intending to strengthen and scale this model, which was originally developed as an immediate response to COVID-19 pandemic, in order to ensure it stays as a model for the country for future possible use. This also includes the possibility of introducing new content and using different communication platforms in addition to WhatsApp.

³ [https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/Child2Child_ConceptualFramework_FINAL\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/Child2Child_ConceptualFramework_FINAL(1).pdf)

by engaging parents with their children's learning activities, such as signing, reading/ telling stories, playing games, and by providing greater verbal engagement, interaction, stimulation and support.

3. SCOPE OF THE WORK (WORK ASSIGNMENT)

This consultancy shall respond to the specific needs of UNICEF as explained below:

1. **Identify** through an in-depth review of the Parent and Child curriculum and a Desk Review of other existing resources and evidence some **key elements of effective school readiness interventions for children aged 3-4 years**, where they could acquire basic skills and abilities during this age period – across the domains of cognition, language, motor, social and emotional development in engagement with/ participation of their parents/caregivers.
2. **Propose an outline with age-appropriate core themes, lessons, and activities** to guide the development of the resource pack based on key findings from the desk review in step #1 of the scope of work; and through conducting KIs with the programme staff from UNICEF, FGDs with the programme facilitators, and an online survey for parents/caregiver, ensuring the outline aligns with national and global early learning and development standards, including in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. **Develop key messages, practical tips, and guidance for parents to support their children's learning** through engaging with them in meaningful interactions and home-based learning activities using household materials that can be implemented within the daily routine.
4. **Content development**-this will include the following key activities:
 - a. **Development of the Parent and Child Resource Pack** in the form of high-quality (i.e. creative, interactive, culturally appropriate) educational concepts and content for children aged 3-4 years with multiple tools that fit with the day-to-day lives of children and their parents/ caregivers, based on the themes that will be defined and agreed upon in step #2 of the scope of work. The resource pack should be guided by findings from the desk-review and mapping of similar interventions conducted in step #1 of the scope of work.
 - b. **Creating a mini brand for the resource pack**, in order to allow for increased recognition of the pack, which can support uptake of the tools by parents and caregivers.
 - c. **Piloting of the tools**-with close monitoring, this includes reviewing the deliverables by UNICEF and key stakeholders, as well as testing the design and application of all tools and materials with the target population. This will consequently require the development of a testing and evaluation plan, testing methodology, sampling criteria, and any additional requirements deemed necessary for pilot testing in agreement with UNICEF.
 - d. **Development of a practical guidance** on the implementation of the resource pack, including propping questions, lesson plans, in order to ensure that the content and tools are being used in an optimal and consistent manner by the facilitators as well as directly by parents/caregivers.
 - e. **Development of a monitoring and evaluation framework and tools**, in order to indicate how the interventions is expected to contribute to the children and caregivers' outcomes.
5. **Conduct short-introductory online training** for the ECD facilitators who will be responsible for sharing the content with families and following up on implementation.
6. **One additional activity that can be proposed by the contractor** based on the company's experience/profile. The activity could be in the form of live sessions through UNICEF social media platforms for a certain duration- UNICEF and the contractor would agree on topics and duration and best outlets for its viewing upon signing the contract.

FURTHER GUIDANCE ON THE PARENT AND CHILD RESOURCE PACK:

- The resource pack shall comprise of:
 - a) Existing content from the Parent and Child Curriculum (and possibly other relevant resources⁴) which will be adapted by the contractor in agreement with UNICEF as deemed appropriate and based on findings from the data gathering process.
 - b) Newly developed/custom-made material, content, and tools based on findings from the data gathering process. This to include, but not limited to 2-D animated videos, songs, stories, activities, and interactive resources to support parents and guide them in the best way possible to ensure their children’s school readiness and stimulate their development.
 - c) In addition to the digital content, printable resources and MP3 player⁵ with a library of songs and stories will be required for families in the most hard to reach areas, including those who don’t have access to internet connectivity/smart phones.
 - d) Should the Contractor have previous experience developing similar work with another UNICEF CO(s), UNICEF Jordan welcome the idea of adapting existing materials as relevant to the content of the Parent and Child Programme. However, UNICEF Jordan and/or the Contractor shall obtain necessary approvals, and appropriate credit must be given to the respective Country Office(s).
 - e) It is advisable to adapt existing materials, packages and content where possible; therefore, the resource pack can include existing high quality international and regional resources that are available in Arabic or in English [to be translated into Arabic], which can be adapted and included in the pack where possible, provided that they are grounded in evidence-based principles and approaches⁶, culturally appropriate, and relevant to the content of the PCP.
- The Parent and Child resource pack should be aligned with the Jordanian developmental and educational standards (will be provided by UNICEF), and guided by global standards, such as the Early Years Foundation Stage⁷ as well as the regional Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) Framework⁸, which promotes the acquisition of life skills that are age appropriate and culturally sensitive starting from early childhood through primary and secondary education in formal and non-formal settings using multiple pathways of learning.
- The resource pack should comprise 12 themes, covering the basic minimum skills, abilities, and knowledge in a variety of developmental domains that will enable children to be successful in school, including, but not limited to, literacy, numeracy, ability to follow directions, working well with other children and engaging in learning activities.
- The resource pack should promote holistic development by connecting between the different domains through combination of three key aspects: **learned behaviours**, such as knowing colours and shapes, counting numbers and saying letters of the alphabet; **attitude and emotional competence**, as in listening to directions, being interested in learning and behaving in a socially acceptable manner; and **developmental maturation**, including fine and gross motor development and sitting still for an appropriate period of time.

⁴ Existing resources will be made available to the contractor by UNICEF upon signing the contract

⁵ UNICEF will be responsible for printing and procurement of mp3 player. Therefore, additional cost shall not be included in the financial offer.

⁶ [Family and Parenting Support](#), UNICEF Innocenti, 2015

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage>

⁸ <https://www.unicef.org/mena/reports/life-skills-and-citizenship-education-mena-countries>

- The resource pack should include skills that prepares a child for the acquisition of higher and more complex skills at the age of 5 (KG2 level).
- In addition to the traditional set of developmental domains, the resource pack is to include global considerations, such as moral development, appreciation of diversity, and basic awareness of child safety and protection. Specific nature and scope of the content related to each theme is to be identified through analysis of the session and the expected outcomes for children and caregivers.
- The resource pack is to include, but not limited to graphic design (posters, brochures, flashcards); 2D animation videos; WhatsApp audible and visual memes; propping questions; Social media content; games; SMS based content.
- Produced content, including artwork, motions, videos, animation and other content are to be appropriate for placement on social media channels (i.e. fit into Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) and WhatsApp dissemination.
- The finalized tools shall include camera ready artwork for all printing materials and studio ready materials for electronic media to UNICEF.
- All newly developed and/or adapted material should be tested in order to ensure they are effective, attractive, and relevant. Subsequently, the tools shall be modified based on the findings of the testing, and then to be finalized based on the final validation by UNICEF.
- The resource pack, to the maximum possible extent, should be appropriate for vulnerable settings, take into consideration illiterate parents, parents of children with disabilities, and can be used with multiple children at the same time.
- The contractor is to ensure multiple tools are produced concurrently.
- The contractor is advised to ensure flexibility in the production process and build multiple rounds of edits for the tools into the methodology and timeline for this assignment given that the resource pack is expected to be developed through a participatory approach.
- The final approved version of the creative content and orientation guidelines are all to be in Arabic. Therefore, for whatever material that is developed in English are to be translated into Arabic, proofread, and reviewed by a copywriter.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT:

- Building on good practices and well-established school readiness, digital early learning activities, and parenting interventions to learn from their experience and results to inform the wider process.
- Following international best practices for COVID-19 response communication and parenting support interventions.
- Appropriate content for female and male caregivers.

4. ESTIMATED DURATION OF THE CONTRACT AND PAYMENT SCHEDULES

It is expected that this consultancy will be conducted from late December 2020 to August 2021. However, the resource book is expected to be finalized by end-July 2021. The remaining duration is intended for the additional activities/events that will take place on UNICEF’s Social Media platforms.

Proposed and estimated timeframe for deliverables is listed under each deliverable below. The team should propose a timeline to submit the deliverables considering necessary and adequate time (at least two weeks) to be allocated for review and quality assurance processes of the deliverables.

5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES, DELIVERY DATES, and PAYEMNT

Payment is contingent on approval by the contract manager and will be made as indicated in the following table.

Deliverables	Delivery Date	Payment
1. Inception report (in English) that includes a detailed indicative workplan for the project.	Early January 2021	10%
2. Curriculum review, Desk Review, and data gathering report (in English) that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - available evidence that identifies key elements of effective school readiness interventions for children aged 3-4 years where they could acquire basic skills and abilities during this age period – across the domains of cognition, language, motor, social and emotional development in engagement with/ participation of their parents/caregivers. - <i>Regular reporting to UNICEF project team members</i> 	Mid-January 2021	15%
3. Draft an outline (in English) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is drawn from the desk review and data gathering [reviewing the PCP curriculum, consultations with UNICEF and key stakeholders-a minimum of one FGD, and undertaking an online survey for parents]; - is guided by the evidence-based school readiness and parenting interventions; - age and developmentally appropriate for children aged 3-4. - addresses the “whole child” taking an integrated approach across the core developmental domains as well as global considerations, such as moral development, appreciation of diversity, and child safety and protection. - identifies proposed programme strategies and indicative content. - <i>Regular reporting to UNICEF project team members</i> 	Mid-January 2021	
4. key messages and practical tips for parents to support their children’s learning through engaging with them in meaningful interactions and home-based learning activities using household materials that can be implemented during the daily routine (in Arabic) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Regular reporting to UNICEF project team members</i> 	Mid-February 2021	10%
5. Custom-made Parent and Child Resource Pack that have a mini-brand as specified in sections 3, 4, and 5 in this TOR. (final product to be in Arabic) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Regular reporting to UNICEF project team members</i> 	Mid- March 2021	35%
6. Piloting of the tools-with close monitoring , this includes reviewing the deliverables by UNICEF and key stakeholders, as well as testing the design and application of all tools and materials with the target population. This will consequently require the development of a testing and evaluation plan, testing methodology, sampling criteria, and any additional requirements deemed necessary for pilot testing in agreement with UNICEF.	Early April 2021	

- <i>Regular reporting to UNICEF project team members</i>		
7. Adjusting content and revising the tools based on findings from the pilot testing phase.	Mid- May 2021	
- <i>Regular reporting to UNICEF project team members</i>		
8. A practical guidance on the implementation of the toolbox, including a M&E framework. (final product to be in Arabic)	End-May 2021	20%
- <i>Regular reporting to UNICEF project team members</i>		
9. Monitoring and Evaluation framework and tools	End-May 2021	
- <i>Regular reporting to UNICEF project team members</i>		
10. 2-3 days introductory online training for the ECD facilitators who will be responsible for sharing the content with families and following up on implementation	Early June 2021	
11. One additional activity that can be proposed by the contractor for a certain duration- UNICEF and the contractor would agree on topics and duration and best outlets for its viewing upon signing the contract.	Early July 2021	10%
	Total	100%

No Advance payment to be made. Payments will be made against each milestone/deliverable and only upon UNICEF's acceptance of the work performed. The terms of payment are Net 30 days, after receipt of invoice and acceptance of work. Payment will be effected by bank transfer in the currency of billing.

6. OFFICIAL TRAVEL INVOLVED

No missions expected to be undertaken as part of the assignment.

7. DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERIENCE

This consultancy is planned to be conducted by an institution or by a registered consultancy group/firm being well-established and highly qualified, experienced institution, which has experience in early childhood development/ early childhood education/ parenting support, research and communications. The entity should demonstrate expertise in formative research, content and material development (digital and physical), M&E planning and implementation, and creating interactive educational content for young children and their parents/caregivers and should be qualified in designing communications solutions for early childhood education and have minimum 3 years of experience in the aforementioned work areas.

In addition to the profile of the institution, the team to deliver the service should have the following profile and qualification:

If the project is conducted by an international firm, the team leader will ensure that a national expert (Fluent Arabic speaker) is included in the team.

The team will be comprised of a team leader and team member(s), ensuring balance with qualifications, skills and experience stated below.

- Demonstrated experience in developing resources and materials in areas related to parenting, ECD, ECE, life skills.
- Demonstrated research and analytical capability.
- Expertise in multimedia design and production for educational purposes.
- Minimum of one senior expert who has an advanced degree in child development, education or related social science or a related field and a minimum of 4 years relevant professional Experience.
- Fluency in English and Arabic (both written and oral).
- Have completed minimum two high quality projects, where at least one of them being related to ECD/ECE.
- Demonstrated excellent writing skills, and strong communication, in particular for the development of technical documents is essential.
- Profiles and/or CVs of the team as well as references/links to two most recent relevant projects should be provided with the proposal.
- The team should work closely with a qualified Arabic speaking copywrite to finalize the content.

8. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The contractor (service provider) will regularly report to the Social protection Specialist and work closely with the Child Protection/ECD Specialist. The Child Protection Section at UNICEF Jordan Country office will be responsible for managing the contract. Overall supervision of the contract will fall on Mr. Kenan Madi who will work closely with Ms. Sajeda Atari-CP/ECD Specialist.

9. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION OF RESULTS

Proposed timelines for completion of activities are met and deliverables submitted on time with good quality and as per the standards described in the TORs as well as UNICEF global standards. Overall performance at the end of the contract will be evaluated against the following criteria: timeliness, responsibility, initiative, innovation, communication, and quality of the products delivered.

Materials and content produced for this project will be assessed based on the following elements: (1) attractiveness, (2) comprehension, (3) cultural acceptance (4) relevance (5) motivation (6) persuasion and (7) improvement. UNICEF shall work jointly with the Contractor to set 3-5 criteria items for each one of the aforementioned elements.

All deliverables are to be submitted by the contractor in due time, allowing a minimum of 5 business days for UNICEF to review the submission. Feedback will be provided by UNICEF against the assessment criteria for the seven elements outlined above.

10. FREQUENCY OF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

The contractor will submit regular reports as per identified deliverables. Performance reviews will be undertaken upon submission of each deliverable. All reports and deliverables should be submitted electronically in Word, Excel and most relevant statistical software as applicable.

11. CALL FOR PROPOSALS

A two-stage procedure shall be utilized in assessing the proposals, with assessment of the technical proposal being completed prior to any price proposal being compared. Applications shall therefore contain the following required documentation:

A. Technical proposal

Applicants shall prepare a proposal as an overall response to TOR ensuring that the purpose, objectives, and deliverables of the assignments are addressed. All proposals to include (but not limited to):

- A technical proposal that includes a brief cover letter and understandings of the assignment are required- addressing the purpose, objectives, scope, criteria and deliverables of the project.
- Based on the proposed timetable outlined in the TOR, a proposal of the detailed methodology, tentative work plan and time schedule is required.
- Examples of the firm’s engagement in similar activities/productions earlier.
- CV, list of similar experiences/assignments highlighting those focused-on parenting, ECD, and VAC.
- Quality assurance mechanism and risk mitigation measures put in place
- One or two specific examples of similar projects done
- At least two references from a previous employer

B. Financial Offer

A financial proposal with a breakdown of all costs that are to be charged to UNICEF and based on deliverables. This includes estimated number of working days, consultancy fees, all office administrative costs, international and local travel costs, as well as any additional requirements needed to complete project or that might have an impact on cost or delivery of products.

The Financial Proposal shall be submitted in a separate file, clearly named Financial Proposal.

No financial information should be contained in the Technical Proposal.

C. Timetable (Schedule)

This section should include a proposed time/delivery schedule. An action plan specifying the timeframe with various milestones and activities should be included under this section.

In addition, the institution should consider the following in the submission:

- a) Company profile (Company structure, team composition, organogram...etc)
- b) A complete copy latest audited financial statements with comparative figures for the two most recent years; preferably signed by Company's accounting firm/certified external auditor.

The financial statements are to include, but not limited to, the following:

- The Balance Sheet (mandatory)
 - The Income Statement/Profit and Loss Statement (mandatory)
 - Statement of cash flows
- c) A copy of Company’s certificate of legal registration.

12. UNICEF RECOURSE IN CASE OF UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment and consolidated output until the contractor provide satisfactory quality output as reviewed by the project manager / supervisor. In case of unsatisfactory performance, the payment will be withheld until quality deliverables are submitted and subsequently, the contract will be terminated in accordance with the General terms and conditions stated in the tender document if the contractor fails to deliver.

13. INDICATION THAT THE CONTRACTOR HAS RECEIVED A COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT OR, ALTERNATIVELY, AN EXPERT OF RELEVANT PROVISIONS INCLUDING THOSE CONCERNING LEGAL STATUS, OBLIGATIONS AND TITLE RIGHTS.

Yes.

14. CONDITIONS

- 1) The selection process for the consultancy firm will strictly follow UNICEF's internal procurement process and procedures.
- 2) UNICEF will provide assistance where possible for necessary access and permits required for the work.
- 3) The firm will provide draft report (s)/deliverable (s) for review and amend as requested before submitting the final versions.
- 4) Final report on the assignment to be submitted attaching final documents/deliverables prepared in its context in English and Arabic. All intellectual rights of the work are owned by UNICEF

UNICEF will not provide office space to the team. All requirements including venues for workshops, transportation, visa, health insurance, secretariat services, interpreter, translator, etc., will not be covered by UNICEF. UNICEF office may provide (if required) any documentation, letters to government, etc., to make sure that the work is conducted successfully. However, this will not relieve the contractors from its responsibility.