UNICEF

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Individual Consultancy (both national and international consultants are encouraged to apply)

Undertaking of a “light” situation analysis of children in Moldova, focusing on social inclusion, violence and youth engagement (as a preparation to a mid-term strategic moment of reflection related to the UNICEF – Government of Moldova Country Programme of Cooperation 2018-2022)

Duration: 40 working days (within a four-month period July-October 2019)

Location: Home-based, remote work

1. Background

A Situation Analysis (SitAn) of children’s rights and well-being in a country is a flagship product of the United Nations’ Children Fund (UNICEF) that supports advocacy and informs policy dialogue, partnerships and interventions to improve children’s lives.

The last comprehensive SitAn was conducted in Moldova in 2016\(^1\) to support the preparation of the Government of Moldova - UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation (CPD 2018-2022). It reflects progress and challenges in realization of child rights in the country, while also considering Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related aspirations and analyzing key socio-economic indicators impacting child wellbeing with majority of the data covering the period 2010-2015.

Since 2016 there were several important developments the Republic of Moldova has undergone. Among them are: the reporting to the various treaty bodies, further advancing of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, generation of further evidence on key issues of concern with new reports, information, data and official statistics available to analyse the progress and remaining challenges that affect the situation of children in the country.

In 2016 the Republic of Moldova prepared its fourth and fifth periodic report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the CRC Concluding Observation were issued in late 2017. UNICEF supported the preparation of Children’s report for the CRC and contributed to the periodic reporting of the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities\(^2\). The European Union also regularly holds annual Human Rights Dialogues with the Republic of Moldova, discussing a wide range of issues, including child rights implementation.

Moldova has committed to implement the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. The agenda offers a new approach of development, focusing on promoting human rights in all aspects. The National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development\(^3\) was created under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, several reports on nationalized SDG indicators and targets were finalized and National Development Strategy ’Moldova 2030’ developed. The latter represents a strategic vision document that describes the development direction of the country and the society in line with the Agenda 2030.

\(^1\) https://www.unicef.org/moldova/rapoarte/copiii-din-republica-moldova

\(^2\) https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/ENACARegion/Pages/MDIndex.aspx

\(^3\) https://gov.md/en/content/national-policy-agenda-be-adjusted-sustainable-development-goals-2030
In 2016-2019 the latest official statistics and key child-related indicators have been updated and were complemented with the data and findings of various studies and researches, supported by UNICEF and other partners.

In preparation for a moment of strategic reflection UNICEF CPD 2018-2022 (planned for 2020), taking stock of progress in realizing child rights as per CPD priorities, a light Situation Analysis (SitAn) is envisaged to be undertaken to provide an updated analytical narrative on child and adolescents rights and well-being in Moldova, focusing on key challenges and emerging issues. The development of a light SitAn is one of the key programmatic priorities for UNICEF Moldova, as outlined in the Annual Management Plan 2019. The SitAn findings will be used for programming and advocacy to further advance children and adolescents’ agenda in the Republic of Moldova.

2. Purpose and objectives of the consultancy

The primary purpose of the SitAn is to provide recent evidence on the situation of children and youth in the country by analysing the implementation of child rights within the country context.

Specific focus should be placed on the demographic profile, political and economic context, governance, public financing (especially regarding children), poverty and drivers of inequity, with specific focus on gender inequalities and gender gaps. The SitAn should identify key stakeholders advancing the child rights agenda and provide specific recommendations for future possible policy and programme interventions.

The specific objective of this consultancy is to produce a “light” SitAn focusing briefly on the above macro socio-economic and political overview of the country context (captured in an introductory chapter) followed by specific analysis of three key thematics: social inclusion of most vulnerable children, violence against children and adolescents, and youth engagement and empowerment (captured in specific thematic chapters, each not exceeding 10 pages).

Specifically, the consultancy will:

- review available key knowledge products (research and studies) of UNICEF conducted in the period 2017-2019 (as reflected in Annex 1)
- review available data sources (official statistics, treaty body reports, other UN agencies and organizations’ reports linked with the three thematic areas – UNICEF will provide a suggested list of such reports)
- conduct (skype) interviews with stakeholders, if needed so, to complete the data and information (UNICEF will facilitate contacts)

Based on this review, produce a comprehensive report providing synthesised information on:

- Moldova’s macro socio political and economic context with potential impact on realization of child rights;
- A summary overview of the situation of children in regard to social inclusion, violence against children and adolescents, and youth engagement and empowerment captured in issue-based chapters (that can also be used as stand-alone briefing papers as required);
- Key policy and program recommendations.

The analysis will take into consideration key data from UNICEF’s 2016 SitAn (to be used as baseline) and, based on most recent data analysis, will comment on key areas of progress and key remaining bottlenecks for realization of child rights.

3. Methodology

The light SitAn main methodological approach is to review and synthesise available data from document/research/studies, compare key available statistical and administrative data with
2016 SitAn baselines, analytical review on the progress achieved against the 2017 CRC Concluding Observations and on child related SDGs in the past two years. No quantitative primary data will be collected. Skype interviews with stakeholders could be considered, in case if additional information is needed so. The analysis will specifically draw on available data and reports such as UNICEF supported studies, surveys, assessments and evaluations (comprehensive list provided in Annex 1), as well as official statistics, reports etc.

The light SitAn should analyse the situation of children in Moldova’s specific contexts with focus on social inclusion, violence and youth issues. It should explore the reasons behind the uneven realization of child rights, inequities in well-being and the opportunities to achieve progress for all children, especially those who are left behind or at greatest risk of being left behind.

The final report should cover the following areas and recommended key questions:

3.1. Executive Summary (of max 3 pages):
   ➢ Introduction
   ➢ Methodology
   ➢ Summary of key findings
   ➢ Summary of key recommendations

3.2. Macroeconomic context overview (3-4 pages max):

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE – presents overview of country's population characteristics using data from the latest Population and Housing Census, vital statistics, national household surveys etc.
   ➢ What are the trends and shape of the population, in particular the population of children and young people, and the impacts these demographic trends may have in the foreseeable future?
   ➢ What are the specific characteristics of urban and rural populations in regard to child rights?

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND GOVERNANCE: presents the context in which power and resources are distributed in the country, including the governance structure and the degree and type of decentralization, and how these impact child rights and well-being.
   ➢ What are the most important political and economic trends including economic growth and how those impact the realization of child rights?
   ➢ How inclusion of vulnerable populations, including children, can be taken to scale?

PUBLIC FINANCE: aims to provide an understanding of the financial landscape affecting children rights.
   ➢ What are the national budget allocations and spending for goods and social services critical to children’s well-being?
   ➢ Is there a relevant fiscal space in the country including external sources of financing such as overseas development assistance (ODA)?
   ➢ How public resources are distributed, including across regions, and their contribution to (or lack thereof) achieving children's rights?

DRIVERS OF INEQUITIES: presents the main drivers of inequities that affect children’s rights and well-being in the country.
   ➢ Where the largest inequities lie, and what causes these disparities? The analysis will, data permitting, look at inequities across different age categories to support the realization of child rights across the life cycle.
The analysis should cover as well cross cutting issues such as gender dimension and humanitarian concerns. More specifically:

**GENDER PROFILE**: assess possible unequal outcomes of girls and boys and explore the gender-related causes that underpin them, using sex-disaggregated data and deeper qualitative analysis of the immediate, underlying and structural causes. The analysis of gender-related barriers includes the review of demand and supply of services, the socio-cultural environment, and prevailing legislative and policy frameworks.

**STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**: maps out the main stakeholders for child rights and well-being in the country, including: government, human rights bodies, civil society, donors and communities, business, the private sector, multilateral financial institutions (such as the World Bank) and regional bodies if appropriate.

- What systems and mechanisms for the engagement of children and young people as key stakeholders rather than passive players exist, whereby they are engaged and participate in a meaningful manner?

3.3. Thematic briefs

In addition to the macroeconomic and policy context, the light SitAn will develop three thematic briefs (each of 10 pages max) focusing on three key themes: social inclusion of vulnerable children, violence against children and adolescents and youth engagements and empowerment. The macroeconomic context overview shall analyze child deprivations mainly in regard to these three thematics.

Specific issues analyzed in the thematic briefs will cover:

3.3.a/. Social inclusion of vulnerable children

The thematic brief will look at several categories of vulnerable children: children and adolescents without parental care and living in institutions, children and adolescents with disabilities, children and adolescents living in poverty, children and adolescents in street situation, children and adolescents from ethnic and/or language minorities, children and adolescents left behind by migrant parents. Life cycle approach will be considered starting from early childhood development (nutrition, immunization etc.)

3.3.b/. Violence against children (VAC)

While a comprehensive analysis on VAC has not been recently done, in past years various studies looked at various aspects of VAC. A comprehensive review and consolidation of the analysis of these studies has the potential to shed light on the key drivers and root causes for this phenomenon and will support provision of specific recommendations anchored in the macro-economic and policy analysis to robustly address this issue.

3.3.c/. Adolescents and youth engagement and empowerment

Similarly, to the VAC, a comprehensive analysis on Youth engagement and empowerment has not been recently done, however here as well topical and issue-based studies have done, which will allow key conclusions on specific barriers and deprivations that jeopardize the right adolescents and youth to participation.

Causality analysis:
A causality analysis should be applied both to the macro-economic overview and the thematic briefs. The causality analysis should look at key drivers such as: economic and social factors, laws, norms, geography, climate change, unplanned urbanization, gender, tribe, ethnicity, caste, religion and disabilities and how those impact outcomes for children and adolescents. Special attention needs to be placed on analyzing the situation (where possible) of children who are unaccounted by traditional national systems, such as refugees, asylum seekers, children on the move, children out of school, children on the streets, and those in institutions.

Specifically, in regard to the three thematic briefs, the analysis will seek to understand:

- Do children and young people, especially the most vulnerable, enjoy their rights to available, accessible, adequate and effective services and opportunities and are those services adequately financed?
- What specific factors have contributed to the realization of child rights and well-being?
- What are the main child rights violations and remaining challenges?
- What are the top factors and risks (prioritization is key here) that prevent the realization of child rights and well-being?
- What are the key factors that drive inequities in the realization of child rights and well-being?
- Are children engaged as active agents in decisions and how they are engaged (what mechanisms are used)?
- What progress and commitments have been made on addressing supply, demand-side, enabling environment and quality factors (culture, norm, etc.) that leaves no child behind?

To answer the above questions, the consultant will conduct a comprehensive desk review of the:

- Key UNICEF studies conducted in the period 2016-2019, including the UNICEF's 2016 SitAn
- Review official statistics, specific UN agencies and other organizations’, including CSOs’ reports, studies and other evidence;
- Review the draft national development priorities as reflected in Moldova 2030 Agenda, and other relevant policy documents;
- Review the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child from 2017, focusing but not limited to para 10, 17, 19-28, 34(b) and 35.
- Review implementation of child rights against key child related SDGs and indicators

The list of key documents and publications to be reviewed can be found in Annex1.

Where necessary (skype) interviews with key stakeholders can be facilitated by UNICEF.

Expected products are, the development of a comprehensive report with the following structure:

- Executive summary (max 3 pages)
- Macroeconomic context overview (3-4 pages)
- Thematic briefs (each one of max 10 pages, or a total of max 30 pages)
- Overall conclusions and recommendations (max 2-3 pages)
The report will not exceed 40 pages without annexes. Wherever relevant, graphs and illustrative examples will be incorporated in the text.

The overall analytical approach has to be in line with the UNICEF’s Core Guidance: New Generation Situation Analysis developed in 2019 (Annex 2).

4. Work Assignment (tasks) and Deliverables

The following table presents the proposed key tasks, deliverables and timeline*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Key Tasks</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Work plan with proposed methodology and timeline</td>
<td>Work plan</td>
<td>July</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Desk review of all available sources, defining detailed structure of the</td>
<td>Inception Report</td>
<td>July -August</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>report and issue-based chapters /thematic briefs</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 working days</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Prepare draft report including macroeconomic context overview and</td>
<td>Initial draft of the SitAn report</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>three thematic briefs</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Review and validate of draft report - first round of comments</td>
<td>Revised draft of the SitAn report,</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>addressing comments</td>
<td>3 working days</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Second draft of the report, including executive summary and conclusions</td>
<td>Final version of the SitAn report</td>
<td>October</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and recommendations resulted in Final version</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 working days</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Documentation of the assignment (list of data sources and documents used</td>
<td>Documentation of the assignment</td>
<td>October</td>
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<td></td>
<td>for desk review, excel file with graphs etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 working day</td>
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</tbody>
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Exact deadlines will be mutually agreed upon contract signature. Activities 3-5 could be adjusted with the details outlined in technical proposal, e.g. thematic briefs could be developed either (i) in parallel, with the submission for review of all three at once or (ii) one by one and once one thematic brief is prepared it will be sent to UNICEF for feedback etc.

5. 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 of cooperation and communication with UNICEF and with counterparts.

6. Supervisory arrangements and reporting requirements

The assignment will be supervised by the Monitoring and Evaluation/Child Rights Monitoring Specialist who will ensure coordination of work with overall guidance by the Deputy Representative. For quality assurance other Programme colleagues will be assigned to work directly with the consultant as follows: Social Policy Specialist (Social Inclusion Thematic brief), Child Protection Specialist (Violence) and Youth & Adolescents Development Officer (Youth engagement).
The supervisor together with the UNICEF programme team will ensure the consultant’s compliance with the TORs and with progress being made as per the agreed work plan, and regular feedback will be provided through calls (phone, skype etc.) and emails. In case a national consultant will be selected for this assignment, face-to-face meetings will be also considered.

All activities and deliverables undertaken by the consultant shall be discussed and planned in consultation with UNICEF and will be executed following approval from UNICEF. The consultant is expected to deliver each component of the work-plan electronically in English, by sending them to the supervisor of the contract and responsible Programme staff as outlined above, with the Deputy Representative in copy.

7. Qualifications and experience

The key qualifications required include:

- Advanced degree in social science (sociology, economics, anthropology, development studies, etc.) or related fields relevant to the assignment;
- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in conducting equity-focused research and analysis;
- Demonstrated knowledge and application of the human rights-based approach to programming, an understanding of the CRC, CEDAW and other relevant frameworks, as well as SDGs;
- Proven ability to review and synthesize trends, data and information from variety of sources;
- Strong writing and analytical skills to ensure quality of final products;
- Fluency in English;
- Prior experience with the UN and UNICEF in a similar capacity will be an asset;
- Knowledge of regional and local context will be an asset.

8. Content of technical proposal to be submitted

- Cover letter, explaining the candidate’s interest, capability and required qualifications to perform the tasks as outlines above as well as relevant experience with similar type of assignments, including short sample or links to related work;
- Proposed approach and overall vision on the assignment will be done, including timeline;
- Curriculum Vitae.

Overall technical proposal should not exceed 30 pages. All documents need to be submitted in English. In addition, 2 samples of previous similar work produced and at least 3 references should be annexed.

9. Content of financial proposal to be submitted

The applicant should submit the Financial Offer Template, specifying daily fee (in USD) requested for submission of the deliverables described in the Terms of Reference.

If not provided by the ToR, UNICEF will not reimburse costs not directly related to the assignment. This 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 payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/output is incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet deadlines.
10. Payment schedule
The payment will be done in three tranches, according to the following schedule. All deliverables must be delivered on time (in English) and to the satisfaction of UNICEF Moldova.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable (according to the timeline agreed upon with UNICEF)</th>
<th>Proportion of payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Inception Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Initial draft of the light SitAn report including macroeconomic context overview and three thematic briefs</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Final version of the light SitAn report, addressing all the comments and including executive summary, macroeconomic context overview, three thematic briefs and conclusions and recommendations, as well as study documentation</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Payments will be rendered upon successful completion of each task. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/outputs are incomplete, not delivered for failure to meet deadlines.

In case when a Moldovan resident is selected for the assignment, MDL will serve as contract currency, converted at the UN exchange rate applicable at contract signature date.

11. Work location and official travel involved
The consultancy work will be done remotely. The assignment does not include any travels.

12. Support provided by UNICEF
UNICEF will compile and share an initial package of relevant documents, guidance, available data etc. Additional documents and links are to be provided as they emerge throughout the process.

UNICEF will regularly communicate with the consultant, and provide feedback, guidance and necessary support to achieve objectives of the work, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to the performance and quality of work.

13. Ethical considerations
The consultant should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the information and is allowed to use the documents and information provided only for the tasks related to these terms of reference.

As per the DHR PROCEDURE ON CONSULTANTS AND INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTORS, together with the Notification letter, the contractors will be sent the link on Agora containing UNICEF policies on Prohibiting and Combating 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.
Annex 1 Documents for desk review

Below is a recommended list of publications to be included in the review by the consultant, which UNICEF will share with the consultant when he/she is on board. However, the analytical process will not limit to these documents only and additional documents can be reviewed as required throughout the process to analyse social inclusion of vulnerable children, violence against children and adolescents, and youth engagement and empowerment.

2016
Children in the Republic of Moldova: a Situation Analysis, UNICEF

2017
Age matters! Age-related barriers to service access and the realisation of rights for children, adolescents and youth, Regional study, UNICEF
‘Ajutor Social’ evaluation and design, Oxford Policy Management
Analytical review of governance, provision and quality of early childhood education services at the local level in countries of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, UNICEF
Assessment of the national capacities for child rights monitoring, UNICEF
Assessment of early childhood family separation and abandonment, UNICEF
Child centred climate vulnerability assessment, UNICEF

2018
Assessment of application of child-centred methodology by teachers in pre-school, UNICEF
Assessment of child and youth participation barriers in decision making, UNICEF
Assessment of implementation of child centred methodology, UNICEF
Assessment of efficiency and effectiveness of the Municipal Directorate for Child Rights Protection, UNICEF
Automatic Social Assistance Information System in Moldova: assessment and recommendations, World Bank
Children in Street Situations in the Republic of Moldova, Terre des Hommes
Early Childhood Education Budget Brief, UNICEF
ECD KAP Study, UNICEF
Feasibility Study on the opportunities and concerns related to accession by the Republic of Moldova to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure, UNICEF
Gender Inequalities in Moldova’s Labor Market, World Bank
Impact of fiscal decentralization on local public authorities’ planning and budgeting of services for children, UNICEF
Mid-term review of the Youth Strategy 2020, UNICEF
Providing quantitative and qualitative information to serve as baseline for the 2018-2022 Country Programme indicators, UNICEF
Parenting of adolescent’s, Regional study, UNICEF
Study on adverse childhood experiences, WHO
Study on inclusion of children with disabilities in education, UNICEF
Study of the cash-based social protection system for children, UNICEF
U-report polls, UNICEF

2019 (pipeline)
Education Sector Analysis, UNICEF
Joint evaluation of implementation of the Programme for Development of Inclusive Education 2011–2020, including application of child-friendly schools standards, UNICEF
Review on Evaluation and Assessment in Education, UNICEF
Study on bullying and violence among adolescents, UNICEF
Youth Sector Analysis, UNICEF
Youth SCORE Analysis, UNICEF
World Development report 2019, World Bank