Terms of Reference
Service contract to conduct a qualitative survey
‘Adolescent pregnancy: how can we stop it?’
UNICEF Nepal Country Office (NCO)

1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION
The global adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15–19 years) has declined from 65 births in 1990 to 47 births in 2015.¹ However, the number of adolescent mothers in Nepal is increasing. Data shows that the adolescent birth rate in Nepal has increased from 81 to 88 between 2011 and 2016.²³ This is not only much higher than global levels, but it is alarming that the trend is going in the wrong direction. It also shows that it will not be possible to achieve the national target of reducing adolescent birth rate to 55.6 by 2020.⁴ It is the time to take actions to accelerate efforts to reduce adolescent pregnancies in the future.

Adolescent pregnancy has irreparable consequences.⁵ It violates the rights of girls, with life-threatening consequences in terms of sexual and reproductive health, and poses high development costs for communities, particularly in perpetuating the cycle of poverty.⁶ Specifically, young adolescents are more likely to experience complications during pregnancy and childbirth than adult women and are at greater risk of pregnancy-related death. The infants of adolescent mothers are also at higher risk of mortality and morbidity.⁷ In addition to negative health consequences, adolescent pregnancy can also have negative economic and social consequences.⁸ Pregnant adolescents may face stigma and school-leaving may lead to less opportunities for employment perpetuating cycles of poverty.⁹

A systematic review study concluded that socio-economic factors, low educational attainment, cultural and family structure were all consistently identified as risk factors for teenage pregnancy in South Asia,¹⁰

⁶ Ibid.
⁹ Ibid.
¹⁰ Factors associated with teenage pregnancy in South Asia: a systematic review
however, there is still limited data on root causes and perspectives of adolescent girls and boys regarding adolescent pregnancy in Nepal. Effective policies or programmes to tackle adolescent marriage and pregnancy are not also in place. Thus, it is important to have an in-depth understanding of adolescent pregnancy and identify their needs to provide adequate support to the government and adolescents to tackle adolescent pregnancy.

In the Country Programme (2018-2022), UNICEF strives to achieve ‘National and subnational governments, communities and the private sector have increased capacity to provide health services that are sensitive and responsive to adolescents’ needs and improve healthy behaviours’. In line with the Country Programme and the Nepal Health Sector Strategy, UNICEF is seeking for consultancy to conduct a qualitative survey to identify underlying factors for adolescent pregnancy and understand adolescents’ needed support to provide policy recommendations.

2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The survey aims to identify perceptions and root causes leading to adolescent marriage and pregnancy. It also aims to understand their needed support to tackle adolescent pregnancy.

- **Specific objective 1**: Examine root causes of pregnancy among adolescent girls and perspectives of boys, parents and community leaders and others.
- **Specific objective 2**: Identify key components needed for designing a national acceleration program to reduce adolescent pregnancies in both urban and rural communities.
- **Specific objective 3**: Provide concrete recommendations for future policy and programme related to adolescent pregnancy.

This qualitative study will examine the underlying causes of adolescent pregnancy and their needed support through individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The study will also identify perceptions on adolescent pregnancy (knowledge, attitude and practices) and barriers to tackle adolescent pregnancy. The study will also examine perceptions on adolescent pregnancy from adolescent girls and boys (married and unmarried), mothers in law, fathers in law, school teachers, health workers, political leaders, FCHVs, child club members and religious leaders.

The study will cover the Province 2, Karnali Province and Sudur Paschim Province and target areas are one municipality per Province. The research team will propose target municipalities with high rate of adolescent pregnancy. Justification of selected municipalities should be presented in methodology. Target groups are described below. The research will conduct one focus group discussion per group in each municipality (7
groups * 3 municipalities=21) and one KII per category of individual in each municipality (6 categories * 3 municipalities=18). In addition, the team will conduct KII with policy makers at federal and provincial levels to gain their perspectives on past, current and future policy and programmes as below (6 KIIs at provincial levels and 4 KIIs at federal level). The research team may propose other sampling methods and sample size with rationale.

- **FGD (6-12 participants per group) at municipality levels**
  - Adolescent girls married and
    - Pregnant or with children
    - Not pregnant nor without children
  - Adolescent girls unmarried
  - Adolescent boys married
  - Adolescent boys unmarried
  - Mothers in law of adolescent girls
  - Fathers in law of adolescent girls

- **KII**
  - Municipality levels
    - Child club members
    - Female community health volunteers
    - School teachers
    - Health workers (ANM or nurses)
    - Religious leaders
    - Mayor
  - Provincial levels
    - Director, Provincial Health Directorate
    - Secretary, Ministry of Social Development
  - Federal level
    - Adolescent Focal Point, Family Welfare Division
    - About three experts from development partners i.e. UNFPA, USAID, DFID

### 3. SCOPE OF WORK

The implementation partner will carry out the specific tasks as below:

**Work package 1. Implementation plan with survey tools**

- **1.1. Develop a detailed implementation plan including**
  - Survey methods and design
  - Trends in adolescent pregnancy and policy: Global, South Asia and Nepal
- **1.2. Develop survey tools**
- **1.3. Conduct pretesting of survey tools**
• 1.4. Obtain an ethical approval from Nepal Health Research Council

Work package 2. Conduct data collection and develop a draft survey report

• 2.1. Conduct data collection
• 2.2. Perform data analysis
• 2.3. Develop draft survey report

Work package 3. Develop a final report

• 3.1. Draft and finalize a report in consultation with UNICEF based on findings from work packages 1 and 2
• 3.2. Make presentations on findings in the UNICEF organized dissemination meetings at province 2, Karnali Province and Sudur Paschim Province and federal levels (4 times)

4. DURATION
The study will run for 4 months starting March 2020. Number of working days for each team member will vary per their relevance to the expected tasks. The consultancy firm may engage required multiple teams to complete the survey within the agreed timeframe.

5. WORKING LOCATIONS:
The contracted institution will work remotely but will work closely with UNICEF and national partners as needed to support implementation. The team will travel to selected municipalities in Province 2, Karnali Province and Sudur Paschim Province.

Institutional contracts are responsible for their own office space, equipment, logistics and operations.

6. DELIVERABLES:
Deliverable 1. Implementation plan with survey tools (duration: 1 month)

• 1.1. Implementation plan
• 1.2. Survey tool with guideline

Deliverable 2. Draft survey report (duration: 2 months)

• 2.1. Draft survey report with dataset

Deliverable 3. Final report (duration: 1 month)

• 3.1. Report containing survey findings and recommendations for future policy and programmes to end adolescent pregnancy
3.2. Presentation of findings to relevant stakeholders

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE
This project will be managed by the Health section at the UNICEF Nepal office.

In addition, experts from Social Policy, Evaluation, Evidence generation section and Field Offices will review key milestones of the research process and provide technical support throughout the consultancy.

The research team will report to Health Specialist at UNICEF Nepal Country Office who will serve as the key contact point. Quality Assurance of the project implementation will be done by UNICEF Nepal Country Office and the Field offices.

8. PROPOSED PAYMENT SCHEDULE
Payments to be based on the following outputs to deliverables as delivered, certified upon review by UNICEF Nepal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>Key Deliverables</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Completion of the first deliverable: Implementation plan and final survey tools</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(within 1 month upon contract signed)</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Completion of the second deliverable: Draft survey report (within 3 months upon</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>contract signed)</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Completion of the third deliverable: Final report (within 4 months upon contract</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>signed)</td>
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9. CONTRACT SUPERVISION
The contracted institution/firm will be supervised by Health Specialist, UNICEF Nepal Country Office. The service provider is responsible for their own working conditions and to ensure continuity of service and quality support as needed for timely implementation.

10. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED
The minimum qualification for the firm is to have expertise and experience as follow:

1. At least 3 years of experience in the field of research on adolescent health with strong expertise using qualitative research methods. The senior researchers will need to go to the field to conduct all the qualitative research.
2. Proven experience in design, implementation and analysis of quality research in areas of adolescent health

3. Right mix of professionals with relevant education background (advanced university degrees) in disciplines including (i) Public Health, (ii) Social Science or other relevant fields

4. Evidence of in-depth knowledge of adolescent health issues of Nepal, UNICEF strategies and Nepal Health Sector Strategy, and

5. Evidence of strong analytical skills with the ability to document and report in a clear and practical manner in English.

Companies/Institutions interested to apply for this study must be legally registered and must have extensive experience in adolescent health in Nepal. It is expected that the references are provided to demonstrate its experience over the last 2 years.

Research Team:

The agency should comprise of a strong team of senior researchers and technical experts led by technical and academic qualification as below (one team leader and two team members). At least one member should be female considering that main study participants will be adolescent girls.

- **Team Leader:** MPH in Global health or health related fields
  - At least 5 years of professional experience in the field of research on adolescent health combined with strong expertise with the use of qualitative data collection and analysis
  - Substantive knowledge on adolescent health in Nepal
  - Excellent oral and written communication skills in English

Qualification for other two team members as below

- Master’s in social science or other relevant fields
- At least 3 years of professional experience in qualitative data analysis
- Substantive knowledge on adolescent health in Nepal
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English

The composition of the team, CV’s of proposed team members and roles and responsibilities should be clearly articulated in the technical response to this RFP to meet all requirements of the ToR.
Due to the intensive nature of the study, the experts are ideally expected to work throughout the contract period.

11. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Each proposal will be assessed first on its technical merits and subsequently on its price. In making the final decision, UNICEF considers both technical and financial aspects. The Evaluation Team first reviews the technical aspects of the offer, followed by review of the financial offers of the technically compliant vendors. The proposal obtaining the highest overall score after adding the scores for the technical and financial proposals together, that offers the best value for money will be recommended for award of the contract.

The **Technical Proposal** should include but not be limited to the following:

- **Company Profile (points: 5)**
  Summary of company profile. Ensure to include information related to the experience of the company as required and outlined in item 11 of this document.

- **References (points: 5)**
  Details of similar assignments undertaken in last three years, including the following information:
  - Title of Project
  - Year and duration of project
  - Scope of Project
  - Outcome of Project
  - Reference / Contact persons

- **Team Composition with CVs (points: 25)**
  Title and role of each team member
  CV of staff responsible for the research
  Ensure to include information related to the qualifications and experience of each proposed team member as required and outlined in item 11 of this document.

- **Methodology (points: 30)**
  Approach to services requirement detailing how to meet or exceed UNICEF requirements for this assignment

- **Work Plan (points: 5)**
Proposed work plan showing detailed sequence and timeline for each activity and man days of each proposed team member

- Any project dependencies or assumptions

The **Financial Proposal** should include but not be limited to the following:

Bidders are expected to submit a lump sum financial proposal to complete the entire assignment based on the terms of reference. The lump sum should be broken down to show the detail for the following:

- **Service cost:** This should include the cost related to project planning, human resources and coordination operational cost.

- **Travel Costs**
  All travel costs should be included as a lump sum fixed cost.
  For all travel costs, UNICEF will pay as per the lump sum fixed costs provided in the proposal.
  A breakdown of the lump sum travel costs should be provided in the financial proposal.

- Any other costs (if any) Indicate nature and breakdown

- **Copy of the company registration**

- **Recent Financial Audit Report**
  Report should have been carried out in the past 2 years and be certified by a reputable audit organization.

Bidders are required to estimate travel costs in the Financial Proposal. Please note that i) travel costs shall be calculated based on economy class fare regardless of the length of travel and ii) costs for accommodation, meals and incidentals shall not exceed the applicable daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates, as propagated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). Details can be found at [http://icsc.un.org](http://icsc.un.org)

### 12. EVALUATION WEIGHTING CRITERIA

Cumulative Analysis will be used to evaluate and award proposals. The evaluation criteria associated with this TOR is split between technical and financial as follows:
The evaluation criteria for the technical proposal is as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical criteria</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Max points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Company/individual profile with references</strong></td>
<td>Background and capacity of company matching the required qualifications explained in the terms of reference</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team leader and Key personnel</strong></td>
<td>Relevant experience, qualifications and level of effort as detailed in Terms of Reference</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proposed methodology and approach including the workplan</strong></td>
<td>Detailed methodology and approach detailing how to meet each of the deliverables</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial proposal</strong></td>
<td>Breakdown of costs</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MAXIMUM SCORE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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