

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INSTITUTIONAL CONTRACT

Reference:	LRPS-2022-9179565
Title:	Enhancing Child Online Safety Programme
Location:	South Africa
Duration:	Two Years

1. Background and Justification

Background

South Africa is a middle-income country **more than 27** years into the advent of democracy with remarkable progress to improve the well-being of its citizens. South Africa is recognised for its strong legislative framework and policies, including implementing children's rights as articulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, enshrined in the Constitution of SA and the Children's Act. South Africa is faced with the triple challenges of enduring poverty, inequality and unemployment, which impact the lives of children. Almost two-thirds of the South African children live below the upper bound of the poverty line with children in rural areas and those living in female-headed households, particularly at risk.

The fast-developing and continuously changing information and communication technology (ICT) environment is reshaping children's lives globally. Now more than ever children are increasingly relying on online and mobile technologies to learn, participate, play, entertain and socialise. The digital age has brought opportunities to children and its use has been amplified by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, despite the many positive opportunities it provides, the internet also increases children's risk of abuse and exploitation and compounds offline risks and negative experiences such as bullying and harassment, exposure to pornographic and other potentially harmful materials, and possible dangerous contacts.

South Africa committed to being a member of the We Protect Global Alliance in July 2020, this is another significant milestone in the history of the country towards addressing the safety of children online. The proliferation of Internet access points, mobile technology, and the growing array of Internet-enabled devices – combined with the immense resources to be found in cyberspace – provide unprecedented opportunities to learn, share and communicate. The benefits include broader access to information about social services, educational resources, and health information. As children and families use the Internet and mobile phones to seek information and assistance, there is a growing concern that children are equally becoming unsafe in the digital space and the global call is for different actors to report incidents of abuse, not underscoring the fact that these technologies can help protect children from violence and exploitation. The level of digital space vulnerability needs further exploration to adequately position the country in developing its own localized National Response model to the scourge.

In 2021 UNICEF in partnership with the South Africa government conducted the National Kids Online Study as part of the Disrupting Harm Study to examine the opportunities and risks of ICT within a national context. The study revealed that most children (95.3%) and their parents/caregivers (80.2%) have access to the internet via a mobile device - which brings significant opportunities as well as risks. 70% of children use the internet without parental

supervision and 1 in 3 children in South Africa are at risk of online exploitation. Risky online activities included meeting someone face-to-face whom they met on the internet, actively seeking new friends, adding strangers as friends and sharing photos or videos of themselves with persons they have never met. Yet, many children remain silent about their experiences, with 50.5% of children not telling anyone what happened.

2. Scope of Work

UNICEF and the partner organization will work under an agreement for creating online safety platforms that will increase reporting of online violence and encourage digital space entities to work together to ensure the protection of children online.

The work assigned through this institutional contract will facilitate real-time reporting of violations but also provide online support services through a chatbot that will provide initial uptake of information from the caller, through prompt messages to establish if the caller needs further services and divert the caller to the real-time counsellor who will then provide a service in accordance with the needs of the caller.

Project Aim

Empower children and parents/caregivers to navigate risks, and frontline workers to improve digital literacy, report abuse, seek help when needed and become active agents in addressing Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA). This would include working directly with young people in the design and implementation of information and protection strategies. Activities will be developed to build awareness of the risks and how to avoid them, the mechanisms, and pathways to follow if children find themselves in a vulnerable situation, how to make informed choices in their cyberspace activities, and how to provide each other with support. Campaigns will also target parents, caregivers and teachers to be building their abilities to support children's online safety, including building their awareness of the nature of risks, safeguarding measures, and improving their understanding of young people's online activities.

Objectives

The key objective of the appointment is to explore a sub-contracting of a local technology-based organization for the development of innovative technology-related solutions for timely reporting of online violence against children, the establishment of the 24/7 chatbot to provide mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to those victims of violence on online. The Chatbot will directly link victims with counsellors for real-time counselling and follow-up interventions.

Specific Objectives are:

1. Institution will further create a platform where safety tips and additional messages developed by both UNICEF and the Department of Social Development (DSD) will be delivered to the public in translated languages.
2. Institution will translate the content into three languages (English, Zulu, and Sotho).
3. It will work with UNICEF and the Department of Social Development (DSD).

4. Institution will collaborate and work with other entities who are engaging in other areas of the program to ensure coherence and alignment of deliverables in line with the grant requirements.
5. Institution will be identified that will collaborate to amplify the protection of children online, prevent further potential abuse and exploitation and reduce the protracted turnaround time for social justice for victims of online violence.

Scope of the evaluation

Approach

- a. **Desktop Review:** This is not limited to a review of strategic programme documents including legislations, frameworks, plans, guidelines, reports, and evaluations. In addition, a review of assessments, evaluation and monitoring documents on the programme should be conducted.
- b. **Real-time reporting:** The work assigned through this institutional contract will facilitate real-time reporting of violations but also provide online support services through a chatbot.
- c. **A chatbot** that will provide initial uptake of information from the caller, through prompt messages establish if the caller needs further services and divert the caller to the real-time counsellor who will then provide a service in accordance with the needs of the caller.
- d. **Further create a platform** where safety tips and additional messages developed by both UNICEF and the Department of Social Development (DSD) will be delivered to the public in translated languages.

3. Expected Deliverables and Reporting Requirements

- Desk Review Consultations, recruitment, planning, recruitment and coordination with DSD
- Development of digital platforms for reporting and content dissemination
- Draft prototypes for data generation, analysis and reporting, followed by presentations with DSD and other relevant stakeholders
- Launch of the data dissemination platform
- Presentation of the Chatbot with the 24/ 7-hour service
- Submit analysis report with implementation guidelines

Deliverables	Timeline	Payment Schedule
1. Desk Review Consultations, recruitment, and planning, recruitment and coordination with DSD	October 2022	20%
2. Development of digital platforms for reporting and content dissemination	31 January 2023	20%
3. Draft prototypes for Data generation, analysis, and reporting, followed by presentations with DSD and other relevant stakeholders	28 February 2023	20%
4.1 Launch of the data dissemination platform	30 May 2023	20%
4.2 Presentation of the Chatbot with the 24/ 7-hour service	30 May 2023	Combine with 4.1
4.3 Submit analysis report with implementation guidelines	31 October 2023	20%

4. Desired competencies, technical background, and experience

The Partner/s require the following experience and skills:

- A team of qualified professionals in the field of business, computer science, engineering, or information technology (bachelor's degree) with at least five years' experience in data review, analysis, and research in the field of digital platforms.
- Experience in providing high-level administrative or other support to national-level multi-sectoral processes will be an added advantage.
- Demonstratable and extensive experience (proven track record) of more than 7 years in the field of research on the subject of online safety, innovative technology-related solutions, and/or mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to those victims of violence online.
- Experience in working with or in the interface between government and its strategic partners, particularly civil society, faith-based organisations, UN, media, and development partners.
- Excellent communication skills both oral and written.
- Ability to work under pressure prioritising competing demands effectively.
- Ability to produce accurate summaries of meetings, events, and conversations.
- Proficiency in English

The expertise required from the organization/team (competencies, academic qualifications, specialized skills and/or training needed, years of experience in the technical area relevant to consultancy) to be included in the application.

5. Administrative issues

Informal weekly updates on the project, and formal monthly meetings to provide updates. Submit deliverables including progress, challenges, best practices and unexpected outcomes, and areas requiring additional support.

A project report will be submitted one month after the project has concluded.

6. Conditions

As per UNICEF DFAM policy, payment is made against approved deliverables. No advance payment is allowed unless in exceptional circumstances against bank guarantee, subject to a maximum of 30 per cent of the total contract value in cases where advance purchases, for example for supplies or travel, may be necessary.

The contract will be governed by and subject to UNICEF's General Terms and Conditions for institutional contracts.

7. Technical Evaluation Criteria and Relative Points

Technical Criteria	Description of Technical Sub-criteria	Maximum Points %
Overall Response	Completeness of response	10
	Overall concord between RFP requirements and proposal	10
Maximum Points		20
Institution & Key Personnel	Range and depth of experience with similar projects	15
	Number of customers, size of projects, number of staff per project	10
	Key personnel to be assigned: relevant qualifications & experience	15
Maximum Points		40
Proposed Methodology and Approach	Proposed Methodology for this project	30
	Proposed Work Plan to accomplish the Project	10
Maximum Points		40
Total Score for Technical Proposal		100
Minimum Acceptable Score for Technical Proposal		70

Weights: Indicate 70 % Technical vs. 30% Financial Offer

Financial proposal

- A detailed financial proposal should be structured by outputs listed in *specific tasks* and *major deliverables*. Associated costs should be itemised.
- The financial proposal should indicate budget estimated in South African Rands (ZAR).

Please note:

- Prices offered shall be all inclusive and shall remain fixed for the duration of the contract.
- VAT needs to be indicated separately (i.e., fees/budget needs to exclude VAT).

Weights: 70% Technical (total score adjusted to a score out of 70) vs. 30% Financial Offer = 100%

Risks

All reasonable and likely risks should be identified, and relevant risk responses and possible mitigating action defined.